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ABSTRACT

Four papers are included in this document that examines roles of participants in high school change. Each paper draws on data gathered from three years of a three-phase study of change processes in 30 high schools in Texas, Oregon, Maryland, Indiana, New York, and Florida. Four major questions provide research focus: the types, sources, and purposes of change in high schools; the key units of change; the situational factors that influence change; and the method of managing change. The principal technique for data collection was face-to-face structured interviews with school administrators, department chairpersons, teachers, and office personnel. Tables and figures accompany the interview analysis in each report. Interviews sought informant insights on how change occurs and how research on change can best be conducted. The four papers are: "Change in High Schools: Roles and Reactions of Teachers" (William L. Rutherford and Sheila C. Murphy); "The High School Department Head: Powerful or Powerless in Guiding Change?" (Shirley M. Hord and Sheila C. Murphy); "High School Principals: Their Role in Guiding Change" (Leslie Huling-Austin, Suzanne Stiegelbauer, and Deborah Muscella); and "District Office Personnel: Their Roles and Influence on School and Classroom Change: What We Don't Know" (Gene E. Hall, Scottie Putman, and Shirley M. Hord). References follow each paper and discussant remarks on the symposium are appended. (CJH)

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CHANGING THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL:

DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESCRIPTIONS

William L. Rutherford
Shirley M. Hord
Leslie Huling-Austin
Suzanne M. Stiegelbauer
Sheila C. Murphy
Scottie Putman
Gene E. Hall
Deborah Muscella

Discussants

Robert Yin
Edward Ducharme

Report No. 3216

Symposium 56.11
Presented at the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
Chicago, April 4, 1985

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Introduction

Researchers from the Research on the Improvement Process (RIP) program at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education are in the third year of a three phase study of the change process in American high schools. During Phase I, the 1982-83 school year, one or more staff members visited 12 high schools in Texas, Oregon, Maryland, Indiana, New York and Florida. These exploratory visits were made to become more familiar with the organizational structure of high schools and the change efforts taking place, and to examine possible sources of information and strategies for future data collection efforts. In each visit, school administrators, department chairpersons, teachers and students were interviewed to gain their insight related to how change occurs, what innovations were present, and how to best conduct research on change in high schools. Special attention was devoted to understanding the role and function of department chairpersons in school improvement efforts.

Phase II of the high school study, which occurred during the 1983-84 school year, was a descriptive study designed on the basis of the findings from the previous year. Four major research questions provided the focus for this study:

1. What are the types, sources and purposes of change in high schools?
2. What are the key units (school, department, etc.) of change?
3. What are the situational factors that most influence the change process?
4. How is the change process managed in high schools?

To answer the questions it was deemed important to look at high schools located in different size and type communities and at schools with varying change dynamics, that is, schools with much change and those that were more typical for each district. Community types were rural, urban, suburban and

mid-size cities; the high school size varied with the type of community. Nine sites were chosen in 9 states geographically distributed across the nation. At each site 2 high schools were selected as study schools (N=18), one a typical school and the other with much change ongoing.

The third, and current, phase involves 2 school districts and in each district 2 high schools and 3 elementary schools. The purposes of this phase are:

1. To determine the role of the district office in school change,
2. To compare the change process in elementary and secondary schools,
3. To investigate the management of change over the long term, and
4. To study how leadership affects the change process.

The objective of the papers in this set is to isolate and explore the roles of particular participants in high school change: teachers, department heads, principals and central office personnel. A subsequent goal for future writing is to reassemble the participants in order to describe their relationships and to produce an integrated set of papers that answers the four study questions cited above and that speaks to effective district change.

Each of the four papers that follow has drawn on the data from these three years of research in different ways. For example, the report on department heads has made extensive use of data from all three phases as has the report on principals. The most detailed information on district office personnel came out of the third year data but it was richly supplemented by data from year two. Data for the report on teachers came primarily from the second year data.

In all three phases of the study, a face-to-face, structured interview was the principal technique for data collection. Thus, self-report data provides the primary data base for the four research papers. It should also

be noted that the validity of the data is enhanced by extensive triangulation of data from the various interviewees. Those persons interviewed included local school administrators, department heads, teachers, students, counselors, activity directors, athletic directors, music directors and multiple line and staff personnel in the district office.

Certainly the research results reported in this symposium do not provide the ultimate understanding of the change process in high schools but they, coupled with previous reports[1], do contribute to advancing our knowledge of high schools. Furthermore, these findings, plus the proposed hypotheses and tentative recommendations, provide a sound basis for the consideration of future research studies and for change efforts in high schools and district offices.

William L. Rutherford
Research & Development Center
for Teacher Education

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[1]Hall, G. E. et al. The improvement process in high schools: Form, function and a few surprises. Papers presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, April 1984. These may be requested from the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, EDA 3.202, The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 78712.

CHANGE IN HIGH SCHOOLS:

ROLES AND REACTIONS OF TEACHERS

William L. Rutherford
Sheila C. Murphy

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
Chicago, 1985

Change in High Schools:

Roles and Reactions of Teachers[1,2]

William L. Rutherford
Sheila C. Murphy

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

For the past two decades the most certain and consistent feature of American public schools has been change. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a school that has not been engaged in at least one, and usually more, change effort every year for the past 15 to 20 years. In fact, change has become a status symbol for some districts. This fact was vividly portrayed by the public relations brochure of one district that described 16 recent or current changes in the schools of that district, as an indicator of the quality of the educational system.

While 16 recent or current changes may seem excessive, it is not at all atypical for schools to be engaged in a number of changes at the same time. During the past few years, the flow of changes into schools has slowed, but it certainly has not ceased. Variety has marked these changes as collectively they have focused on virtually every facet of school and schooling. Yet, amidst this variety there have been several commonalities.

Most of the changes have been initiated in direct or indirect response to real or perceived societal expectations. After Sputnik there was great

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[1]Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois, April, 1985.

[2]The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education and no endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

emphasis on science and math, followed (not necessarily sequentially) by attention to the disadvantaged learner, the special needs of gifted and talented students, bilingualism, greater student freedoms and choices, restricted student freedoms and choices, and "back to the basics," which includes a renewed focus on math and science as well as communication skills.

Linked with the response to societal expectation is a second common element. That is, most changes have as their ultimate target the student. In one way or another they are intended to have a beneficial influence on students.

A third commonality is that teachers are the intermediate target of changes and the ones initially impacted by most of them. A number of studies have verified the significant impact and influence of change on the concerns of teachers (George & Rutherford, 1980; Hall, 1976; Hall & Rutherford, 1976). Teachers, in turn, represent a crucial link in any effort to change schools. "Educational change depends on what teachers do and think -- it's as simple and complex as that." This statement by Fullan (1982, p. 107) is hardly subject to dispute. Teachers are crucial to change, but what is their role?

Fullan concluded that " . . . because of their cultural conditions and practicality concerns, most teachers do not take the initiative to promote change beyond their own classroom" (1982, p. 119). Consequently, most changes that enter schools do not come from teachers but from other sources such as school administrators, district office personnel, or state or federal officials. These conclusions present a clear picture of the teacher being primarily a <u>recipient</u> of change rather than an <u>initiator</u> of change. This means that in a typical change process changes are "handed down" to teachers from some "outside" source, and the teachers are expected to "make them work."

Changes that are "handed down" to teachers are often referred to as

mandated changes. That term is not used here because mandated means or infers the change is officially required. Actually, many "handed down" changes seem to "float" into the schools. Teachers don't know from where the changes came. Why, if, or when they are to start using the changes and how they are to be implemented. Under these circumstances, teachers often do not perceive the change as mandatory.

This depiction of teacher involvement in change would appear to be accurate for elementary schools which have been the target of the bulk of change research. However, comparatively little is know about the role of teachers in change in high schools. Yet, there is agreement that high schools and elementary schools are different. One difference often noted is that high school teachers view themselves as experts in their field; thus, they are more autonomous than elementary teachers. The existence of subject area departments in high schools represents another major difference. Many believe the locus of power and decision-making resides in the departments.

Because of differences between elementary and high schools, are the roles of high school teachers in change different from those of elementary teachers? Will teachers be active in the initiation of changes for school improvement? Finding answers to these questions about the role of high school teachers in change was one priority in a national study of American high schools (Hall, et al., 1984). Findings from that study related to the role of teachers in change and their reactions to change are reported in this paper.

Purpose

An earlier paper (Rutherford & Huling, 1984) reported the kinds of changes that had recently occurred in the high schools and the units involved in change -- individual teacher, department, school, district, or statewide.

This paper continues the investigation of change in high schools but with the focus on teachers and their role in and reaction to change.

Specifically, the paper addresses three questions:

1. What was the source or impetus of changes that influence or have the potential to influence individual teachers? Of the total number of reported changes, how many were: a) initiated by an individual teacher; b) initiated through the collaborative efforts of teachers; or c) came from other sources such as local school administrators, school district administrators, or state or federal impetus?

2. Is there a relationship between the source/impetus of change and teachers' reaction to the change?

3. Are there other factors in the change process that are related to teachers' reactions to change?

As will be noted in the methodology section that follows, the study findings are based on interview data. Thus, the answers to these questions represent teacher perceptions rather than observed behaviors.

Methodology

The nature of the changes occurring and the factors which influence the change process in different high schools across the nation has been the focus of research conducted by the Research on the Improvement Process (RIP) Program at the Texas Research and Development Center for Teacher Education (Hall, et al., 1984). The High School Study described the types of changes taking place in sample high schools, the management of change efforts, and the key situational factors influencing these efforts. Rather than starting from a preconceived notion of what the high school was or should have been, the RIP High School Study was based on qualitative, descriptive data of change as it

occurred in a high school. Each high school visited represented a unique set of information.

This study of change in high schools was planned to cover a range of schools and situations over a 3-year period. Phase I, conducted in 1982-83, was an exploratory effort in which researchers visited 12 selected sites across the United States to become familiar with the high school context and to pilot data collection methodologies and specific interview questions. Phase II, conducted during the 1983-84 school year, was a descriptive investigation of 18 selected high schools in nine sites geographically dispersed across the nation. The study is currently in Phase III, an intensive year-long investigation in a small number of selected districts to determine how the change process is managed in high schools and how that compares with change management in elementary schools, with special emphasis on the role of district office personnel.

This paper presents data from all 18 Phase II schools. These schools were located in sites encompassing a range of community types including urban, suburban, mid-size city, and rural. The size of the high schools visited varied with the nature of the community type. In all except the rural setting, two high schools were studied in each site. One high school each from two comparable communities was selected for the rural site.

A sample of taped teacher interviews was drawn from all teacher interviews completed in Phase II (n=380). Three taped teacher interviews were selected from each high school (n=54). Two criteria for tape selection were specified: (1) the teacher must not be in his/her first year at the school, and (2) each of the teachers within a school was drawn from a different subject area department. Two researchers divided the tapes for analysis after establishing interrater reliability.

Listening to each tape in its entirety, the researchers recorded data following an identical scheme (Figure 1). Only those changes which had occurred during the past 2 years were recorded and analyzed. Included were those changes which influenced or had the potential to influence teachers. If an individual teacher made a change which touched only his/her own classroom, i.e., added new materials to a unit or changed the order in which content was introduced, it was not included in this analysis. This was done for two reasons. First, the taped interviews did not thoroughly probe for such changes. Second, the intent of this report was to determine to what extent teachers were involved in initiating changes that influenced the school beyond their classroom.

After all the tapes had been analyzed, the researchers compiled the data from the tapes. Information from each district was synthesized so changes were enumerated only once, but multiple reactions to the same change were maintained on the data reduction sheets after all screening was completed. If the multiple reactions differed, they were coded as Mixed. A total of 155 changes remained for analysis.

Data Reduction

One part of the interviews identified how many and what kinds of changes teachers had been involved with during the past 2 years and elicited information about the purpose, source, and scope of the change. In data reduction, a first step was to determine whether the source or impetus for the change came from teachers or some other source. If it was teacher initiated, the next step was to determine if it was an individual teacher or two or more teachers working collaboratively. The code sheet was marked accordingly.

When the source or impetus for the change was not teachers, it was coded "Others," and an effort was made to pinpoint that source. As will be noted in

Figure 1

Initial Analysis of Changes

Teacher Tape # _____ School _____

Subjects Taught _____

Change --

Involvement

_____ initiated by teacher(s)

individual _____
collaboration _____

by others _____
who _____
_____
unknown _____

Reaction

_____ positive _____ neutral _____ negative

the findings, many times teachers did not know the source. Teacher responses led to the 11 subcategories of Others under Category 13 in Figure 2. With the exception of the subcategory context, the others are self-evident. An example of context as a source of change would be a teacher who reports increased class size this year (the change) due to rapid population growth in the community and the school (the source/impetus).

Here it should be noted that many times when changes are initiated by Others, teachers are involved as collaborators with the Others. No attempt was made to capture these data since the focus of the study was on teacher-initiated versus other-initiated changes, not on collaboration.

Once the source of change was established, teacher reaction to the change was coded as being Positive, Negative, or Neutral. Positive reactions were reflected in statements such as, "It is good," "I am pleased with the change," "Teacher input is listened to and this change is a good example of that," or "I only wish we would have made this change a long time ago." Negative reactions were included in comments such as, "Who needed it; it only makes work harder," "Had anybody asked teachers, they would never have made this change," or "The whole thing is just a mess and a nuisance to me."

When teacher reactions were positive or negative they were typically expressed in clear and certain terms such as those above. In those cases where teacher reaction was not evident or when the teacher stated he/she had no particular feeling about the change, it was coded as a neutral reaction. It is possible that some nonexpressions of reaction were more a reflection of indifference than neutrality, but no attempt was made to develop such a distinction.

To respond to the third stated purpose it was necessary to conduct an Expanded Analysis of Changes (Figure 2). All changes are not equal, of

Figure 2

Taxonomy for Expanded Analysis of Change

Nature of change

Responsibility to implement	Degree of change required of teachers	Requirements for use
1. Required	a. major b. moderate c. minor	d. rigid e. flexible
2. Optional		

Primary target of change

3. Teacher behavior/practice

   a. to correct a deficit
   b. to enrich/improve
   c. N/A or unknown
   d. replacement

4. Curriculum/course schedule

   a. to correct a deficit
   b. to enrich/improve
   c. N/A or unknown
   d. replacement

5. Student performance/practices

   a. to correct a deficit
   b. to enrich/improve
   c. N/A or unknown
   d. replacement

6. Organization, procedures/processes, administration

   a. to correct a deficit
   b. to enrich/improve
   c. N/A or unknown
   d. replacement

7. Contextual factors (class size, school climate, school/community relations, teacher benefits/welfare)

   a. to correct a deficit
   b. to enrich/improve
   c. N/A or unknown
   d. replacement

Figure 2 Continued -- Taxonomy for Expanded Analysis of Change

Scope of Change

8. Affects teachers and students

    a. all
    b. many
    c. portion

9. Affects students primarily

    a. all
    b. many
    c. portion

10. Affects teachers primarily

    a. all
    b. many
    c. portion

11. Primarily affects others (community, administrators, etc.)

    a. all
    b. many
    c. portion

Source/Impetus

12. Teacher(s)

    a. individual
    b. collaboration

13. Others

    a. local school administrators
    b. district office
    c. superintendent
    d. state
    e. federal
    f. students
    g. parents/community
    h. unknown
    i. context
    j. private foundation
    k. accrediting agency

Teacher Reaction

14. Positive
15. Negative
16. Neutral
17. Mixed

course, but how do you assign significance to a single change? We concluded that no one scheme of analysis would be sufficient; rather, the scheme must "fit" the intended purpose. In this study the purpose was to investigate those factors that might relate to teachers' reactions to change. The literature on change (Fullan, 1982; Hall, et al., 1984) and our own research experiences led us to believe that the categories in the Expanded Analysis of Changes were most likely to be related to teachers' reactions to changes.

To reduce the size of the task, a random sample of 100 changes were chosen from the total sample of 155 and subjected to the expanded analysis. Complete and final processing of these data has not been accomplished at this time, but initial findings are presented in the next section.

Findings

Question 1: Of the total number of reported changes, how many were initiated: a) by an individual teacher; b) through the collaborative efforts of teachers; or c) came from a source/impetus other than teachers?

A summary of the findings related to this question is presented in Table 1.

Approximately 71% of all the changes came from a source other than teachers. Of the almost 29% of the changes initiated by teachers, 18% were the result of collaborative teacher efforts, and an individual teacher was the impetus for 10% of the changes.

To gain a more precise understanding of the source or impetus of change within the Others category, the various sources were separated into the classifications shown in Table 2. These classifications emerged from the data. In 34% of the cases, teachers did not know the source of the change they described. It is possible that some of these changes came from teachers rather than others, but there was no way to know that. Among the known sources, district administrators (31.6%) and local school administrators (23.4%) were those most frequently identified. Collectively students,

Table 1

Source of Changes

	Number of changes	Percent of total
Individual Teacher	16	10.3
Collaboration of Teachers	28	18.1
Others (including contextual)	111	71.6
TOTAL	155	100.0

Table 2

Changes with Others as Source

Source	Number	Percent of Total
Local School Administrators	26	23.4
District Administrators	35	31.6
Outside district	5	4.5
Parents/Community	2	1.8
Students	2	1.8
Contextual	3	2.7
Unknown	38	34.2
TOTAL	111	100.0

parents/community, context, and outside district sources accounted for only 11% of the changes.

When all the known sources were considered (Tables 1 and 2), district administrators were the impetus for the largest number of known changes (35), followed by collaborative teacher efforts (28), local school administrators (26), and individual teachers (16).

Question 2: Is there a relationship between the source/impetus of change and teachers' reactions to the change?

Data in Table 3 show the pattern of teacher reactions to change. More than half (52.3%) of their reactions were positive, with the next greatest number being neutral (24.5%). Only 17.4% of teacher reactions were negative. When teacher reactions were analyzed by source, some distinct differences were found (Table 4). When the source of the change was an individual teacher (n=16) or teacher collaboration (n=28), positive teacher reactions were significantly greater (87.5% and 85.7%, respectively) than either Negative (6.25% and 7.15%) or Neutral (6.25% and 7.15%) responses. In contrast, when the source of change was Others, teacher reactions were 38.7% Positive, 21.6% Negative, 31.6% Neutral, and 8.1% Mixed. In summary, it was found that when the source was Others, a smaller percentage of teacher reactions were positive than when the source was teachers, either as individuals or through collaboration.

A prevailing belief exists that teachers are more receptive to change when it comes from the bottom up rather than from the top down, but rarely are data presented to support that contention. These data provide concrete support for the claims, at least as it pertains to high school teachers. However, it should not be overlooked that when the change was top down (Others as source), teacher reactions were Positive more than 52% of the time. It

Table 3

Teacher Reactions to Changes

	Number	Percent
Positive	81	52.3
Negative	27	17.4
Neutral	38	24.5
Mixed	9	5.8
	155	100.0

Table 4

Teacher Reaction to Change by Source*

Source/Reaction	Positive		Negative		Neutral		Mixed		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Individual	14	87.5	1	6.25	1	6.25	0	0	16
Collaboration	24	85.7	2	7.15	2	7.15	0	0	28
Others	43	38.7	24	21.6	35	31.6	9	8.1	111
									155

* Percentages based on row totals

should also be remembered that out of the total number of changes in the sample (n=155), in only 17.4% of the cases did the teachers react negatively.

Questions 3: How are other factors in the change process related to teacher reactions to changes?

The subsample of 100 changes was analyzed using the factors presented in Figure 2. Data derived from that analysis are displayed in Tables 5-8.

Out of the 100 changes 58 were Required and 42 were Optional (Table 5). Required changes were those teachers perceived or knew to be required of them. If the teacher felt she/he had an option of using or participating in the change, it was coded as Optional. When teacher reactions to Required and Optional changes are compared (Table 5), required changes had a lower percentage of positive reactions and a higher percentage of negative and neutral reactions than Optional changes. When the change was perceived as optional, two-thirds of the teachers reacted positively and fewer than 5% had a negative reaction. When the change was required, the positive and negative reactions were 41.4% and 25.9%, respectively.

Relationships between the degree of change and teacher reactions are displayed in Table 6. Each change was coded as requiring a Major, Moderate, or Minor degree of change. This was based on the amount of change the individual teacher felt they had to make in their practices. An example of a minor change was a teacher beginning use of a new textbook that didn't differ much from the old one. When a teacher had to adjust to a revised scope and sequence that was introduced into the English curriculum, that was coded as a moderate change. A change coded as Major was the expectation that the teacher would change her classroom teaching procedures to pattern them after Madeline Hunter's instructional approach.

In the interviews teachers were not asked directly to indicate the degree of change they felt was required of them, so the coding was based on the

Table 5

Reactions to Required and Optional Changes*

	Positive		Negative		Neutral		Mixed		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Required	24	41.4	15	25.9	18	31.0	1	1.7	58
Optional	28	66.6	2	4.8	10	23.8	2	4.8	42

* Percentages based on row totals

Table 6

Degree of Change and Teacher Reactions*

	Positive		Negative		Neutral		Mixed		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Major	1	33.3	1	33.3	0	0	1	33.3	3
Moderate	13	43.3	9	30.0	8	26.7	0	4.8	30
Minor	38	56.7	7	10.4	20	29.9	2	3.0	67

* Percentages based on row totals

various statements the teachers made about the change. Although the degree of change was frequently evident from teacher comments, the reader is cautioned to be aware of the inference involved in these ratings.

When considering the data in Table 6, it should be noted first that more than two-thirds of the 100 changes (n=67) required only minor changes on the part of the teacher, and only 3 required a major change. As the degree of change moves from Major to Moderate to Minor, the percentage of positive reactions increases. Inversely, the percentage of negative responses decreases. When the degree of change was Moderate or Minor, approximately one-fourth of the reactions were neutral.

Table 7 presents the data comparing requirements for use of the change with teacher reactions. When teachers perceived that they must use or implement the change in a particular manner, it was coded as a Rigid requirement for use. If teachers felt they could adapt the change, then it was coded as a Flexible requirement. When the requirement was Rigid, the percentage of positive reactions (47.2%) was somewhat less than when the requirement was Flexible (57.4%). For negative reactions, the pattern was reversed. Rigid requirements elicited a much higher percentage of negative reactions (26.4%) than did Flexible requirements (6.4%). Neutral reactions for the two use categories ranged from 24.5% (Rigid) to 31.9% (Flexible) of the sample.

Targets of change and teacher reactions are the final set of relationships reported in this paper. Data are displayed in Table 8. No doubt most changes that occur in a school have a ripple effect that cause them to touch many persons and levels within the school. However, for this study each change was coded according to the unit that would be first and primarily affected, e. g., student performance/practice is the first and most immediate

Table 7

Requirements for Use and Teacher Reactions*

	Positive		Negative		Neutral		Mixed		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Rigid	25	47.2	14	26.4	13	24.5	1	1.9	53
Flexible	27	57.4	3	6.4	15	31.9	2	4.3	47

* Percentages based on row totals

Table 8

Target of Change and Teacher Reactions*

	Positive		Negative		Neutral		Mixed		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Teacher behavior/ practice	3	25.0	4	33.3	4	33.3	1	8.4	12
Curriculum/ Course Schedule	21	60.0	4	11.4	9	25.7	1	2.9	35
Student performance/ practice	15	71.4	3	14.3	3	14.3	0	0	21
Organizational/ Administrative	9	34.6	5	19.2	11	42.3	1	3.9	26
Contextual	4	66.6	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0	6

* Percentages based on row totals

target of a new school attendance policy. Contextual factors are a bit more elusive but nonetheless real. For example, a teacher reports that the climate in the school is better than it has ever been before, and she feels it is due to the change in the student body and greater school success in athletics. In this case the target of the change is contextual since the overall climate (context) of the school is the first factor impacted.

In the target data (Table 8), of the 100 changes only 12 were targeted first at teacher behavior/practice. When changes were targeted to teachers, that drew a lower percentage of positive responses and a higher percentage of negative responses than did any other targets. The teacher target also drew the second highest percentage of neutral responses.

Teacher reactions to changes targeted at Organizational/Administrative were 34.6% positive, 19.2% negative, and 42.3% neutral. When changes were targeted to Curriculum/Course Schedule, or Student Performance/Practice, approximately two-thirds of teacher responses were Positive and less than one quarter were Negative.

Summary and Discussion

As a part of a national study to investigate change in American high schools, 380 high school teachers were interviewed. From these taped interviews, 54 tapes were selected for study of the role of teachers in school change, their reactions to changes, and the factors that influenced those reactions. The 54 teachers reported a total of 155 changes which had influenced them in some way during the previous 2 years. These changes formed the basic data base for this analysis.

A first purpose of the research was to determine to what extent teachers are initiators of changes that have influence outside their own classrooms and

to what extent changes are "handed down" to them. Teachers, as individuals or working together collaboratively, were responsible for initiating 28.4% of the changes, while 71.6% were initiated by local school administrators or sources outside the school. These data indicate that high school teachers are more likely to be recipients of change than to be initiators of change. These findings seem to confirm Lortie's (1975) conclusion that teachers focus more on their individual responsibilities and less on the school as a whole. Whether it is feasible and desirable for teachers to be more involved in the initiation of change is a question that needs to be addressed in future research.

In their reactions to changes teachers were much more likely to be positive than negative. Their response was Positive to 81 changes, Negative to 27 changes, Neutral to 38 changes, and Mixed in 9 instances. Thus, in 77% of the cases, teachers had a Positive or Neutral reaction to the changes they had experienced during the previous 2 years. It is possible that some of the Neutral responses were an indication of indifference and should be grouped with the Negative responses. If, for purposes of speculation, the 38 Neutral responses were assigned equally to the Negative and Positive columns, the Positive responses would still be much larger in number. In relation to school change, there seems to be a common assumption that teachers are quite resistant to change. These data do not support that assumption.

Five factors were investigated as possible influences on teacher reactions to change: 1) source of the change; 2) required or optional change; 3) degree of change; 4) requirements for use; and 5) target of the change. Data from these factors indicate that to develop the greatest number of positive teacher reactions, the changes should be initiated by teachers, use should be optional (rather than required), use should involve only a minor

degree of change, the requirement for use should be flexible rather than rigid, and the target of the change should be some group or thing other than teachers. When change was initiated by someone other than teachers, was required, called for moderate or major change on the part of the teacher, and stipulations for use were rigid, teachers were more inclined to have negative reactions.

Of the five factors investigated, the one that had the greatest influence on teacher reaction was the source of change. When change was initiated by teachers, their reaction was positive approximately 86% of the time. When change came from other sources, teachers reacted positively only 38% of the time. This might appear to be a "so what" finding since it is a commonly held belief that teachers are more receptive to changes when they participate in their development. But there is more to the issue. True, teachers react more positively to changes initiated by colleagues, but it is also true that in 77% of the cases teachers react either in a positive or neutral manner to changes that influenced them. Furthermore, some of the negative reactions are responses to teacher initiated changes. This suggests that future research and development in high school change should not focus on reducing teacher negative reactions to change, for they are already fairly limited. A more important issue to pursue is to determine what role teachers can and should assume that would enhance school improvement efforts.

The involvement of teachers in change presents somewhat of a dilemma. Teachers are more satisfied with changes they initiate, but they do not initiate many changes that influence the school beyond the classroom. Fullan (1982) concludes from his review of research, " . . . that the culture of the school, the demands of the classroom, and the usual way in which change is introduced do not permit, point to, or facilitate teacher involvement in

exploring or developing more significant changes in educational practice" (p. 120). Perhaps this explains why high school teachers do not initiate more changes.

This study focuses on the role of high school teachers and their reactions to change, however, change strategies cannot be established solely on the basis of teacher reactions. Actual use of the change is essential if it is to have influence on school improvement. This means the change must be implemented and institutionalized.

Miles (1983) has found that successful institutionalization is dependent on a set of conditions or factors that are somewhat different from the factors associated with positive teacher reactions to change. These factors include strong administrative commitment to the change which leads to pressure and support for the change effort. Additionally, institutionalization is greatly enhanced if the change is mandated rather than left optional. Finally, changes in the organization may be needed to protect and stabilize the change.

The responsibility of those who would facilitate change in high schools is to utilize strategies that attend to teachers in a personalized way and, at the same time, provide for implementation and institutionalization of change.

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THE HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT HEAD:

POWERFUL OR POWERLESS IN GUIDING CHANGE?

Shirley M. Hord
Sheila C. Murphy

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
Chicago, 1985

The High School Department Head:

Powerful or Powerless in Guiding Change?[1,2]

Shirley M. Hord
Sheila C. Murphy

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas

What is the major focus of your Department Head role?

"My role includes the responsibility of staying alert to the most recent research findings, to the development of new techniques and instructional strategies, to the availability of new programs and products; followed by disseminating the information and materials to the staff of my department and facilitating utilization by the teachers."
(Department Head A).

"In my mailbox I receive memos about meetings, scheduling and other school calendar information from the district office or from the principal; I screen it quickly to determine what needs immediate attention, duplicate it and distribute it to the mailboxes of my teachers."
(Department Head B).

The perceptions and reality of high school department head roles are as diverse as the examples above suggest, not only among those occupying the position, but also among those who relate closely to heads and among those who are removed from them in the school organization. Because the department head role has not been the focus of much research, it is not well understood and is lacking in definition, especially regarding the functions of leadership and facilitation of change.

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[2]The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education, and no endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

In this paper, which is based on the results of a three-year study of change in high schools, we describe popular perceptions of the department head role and review related literature on the topic. We then report the study findings, first the behaviors of department heads grouped in functions and the various combinations of the functions found in practice in high schools, that constitute six unique roles. To enhance the reader's understanding and to enliven the text we include short descriptive pictures or brief vignettes of department heads as we perceived them in our study. Second, we identify factors from the study that seem to have some impact on the department head role or influence its operationalization. And third, we describe the relationships department heads have with other high school and district level participants found in the study.

In the Implications and Recommendations section, we attempt to suggest from the data why some heads are active and effective in facilitating change and school improvement, and others are not, and develop some propositions as a result of our analysis. We conclude this section with recommendations regarding the department head role for policymakers, researchers and practitioners.

Background Research and Popular Perceptions of Department Heads

In our search to understand the role of the high school department head, we found a very limited literature base related directly to high schools. However, we found a number of widely held, data-free perceptions that seek to explain the role.

Review of the Literature

Institutions of higher education (IHE) have been the setting for many detailed department head studies. Direct transfer of information between the

two contexts does not seem practical. Of the literature specifically drawn from high school departments, only a fragment is based on research.

Reports of heads' suggestions. A portion of the literature specifically addressed to high school department heads seems to be composed of suggestions based on the author's years of experience in the position. This literature tends to be subject matter specific and deals primarily with "How To Be A Good Science/Mathematics/English Department Head." For example, Adams (1983) offers advice to English department chairs on the behavior of academic departments. Duxbury (1984), based on his own years of experience as a department head, discusses the main features of the department head's role in determining the success of girls in physics.

Small narrow studies. Another portion of the department head literature, while based on research, utilizes samples limited by either the small number of subjects or the narrow focus of the sample population. Free (1982) describes the way one principal involved teachers in the selection of a department head. Fellows and Potter (1984) generate recommendations for job descriptions based on an examination of job specifications found in advertisements in "The Times Educational Supplement." Davies (1983) presents data and makes recommendations concerning decision making gathered from a limited survey of secondary department heads in Great Britain. Weaver (1979) makes recommendations for inservice education based on a survey of 76 department heads. Papalia (1970) offers suggestions to department heads based solely on a survey of foreign language departments. While the information in these reports is interesting, it is difficult to generalize.

Leadership and principal literature. There is a substantial body of literature concerning high school department heads which draws on general leadership literature and on studies of the role of the principal. Turner

(1983) encourages school administrators to develop leadership competencies for department heads and suggests readings from the leadership literature. While at first glance this may seem like a logical horizontal transfer, on closer inspection the information may not be generalizable to high school department heads. High schools generally function within a context that specifies the goals and objectives of programs, thus reducing the base of influence of heads. Department heads are further restricted by the nested compartmentalized environment of high schools. It is clear that the role of high school department heads does not have the scope of the principal's role. To suggest that guidelines for effective functioning of principals are easily transferable between the two seems to be an overgeneralization. Department heads without the power of teacher evaluation, hiring, and firing simply do not own the power of a principal with those options.

Application of higher education studies. Finally, a large part of department head literature comes from research based in higher education settings. For example, Marcial (1984) attempts to apply the conclusions from Bennet's (1982) IHE-based department head research to high school department heads. Sergiovanni (1984) attempts a similar transfer. But, because of contextual differences, IHE findings may not be directly applicable to high schools. Among the observable differences between IHEs and high schools are community expectations, contractual limitations, and the nature of the student body. Generally, the expectations of a community about the educational outcomes of high school students and IHE students differ. High schools are seen as a place for learning "the basics," while IHEs are often perceived as places for specialized, professional training. Additionally high schools not only must be concerned with the academic development of students but also are expected to attend to the day-to-day realities such as student attendance

policies. Because student attendance is mandated throughout most of the high school experience, heads must often struggle with a lack of motivation. That is not to say that IHE faculties are blessed with classrooms full of highly motivated students. Rather, part of a high school head's responsibility is motivating students. That norm is not as prevalent in the IHE teaching culture. Another direct limitation on high school department heads are contractual constraints. Department heads usually fall under teacher, rather than administrator, negotiations. Because of this classification, the potentially more powerful functions of the role, such as evaluation and hiring are often outside of the high school department head's realm of responsibility. IHE department heads generally negotiate such powers into the role (Douglas, 1983).

The generalizability of most department head studies is limited. Use of small or subject matter specific samples restricts a broad application of the findings to the more general focus on department heads. Many recommendations generated from the department head literature are based on opinion rather than grounded in a researched data base. Studies from IHE settings and recommendations elicited from the leadership literature do not acknowledge the unique characteristics of the role of the high school department head. Indeed, gaps in the current literature illuminate the need for extensive research specifically targeted toward understanding the department head's role in the high school setting. Some of these gaps seem filled by "popular perceptions" rather than grounded research findings.

Popular Perceptions

The role of department chairperson or department head can be portrayed as one of "paper pusher" at the one extreme and as "commander in chief" at the other, depending on who is describing the role. Because there has been little

study that defines and describes the role, a wide variety of data-free perceptions abound. A very popular belief about heads relates to the way high schools are structured as departments.

Perceptions influenced by departmental organization. The typical high school, unless it is quite small, is organized in a cellular fashion into subject/academic discipline groupings or departments. These groupings have a specific academic or topical focus which tends to result in small, closed social systems that serve as rallying points in an otherwise large and loosely coupled organization. Given this departmental organization of high schools and related situational factors, such as teachers' identification with the department rather than with the school overall, it is widely assumed that the chairpersons of departments are a leverage point for change.

Principals, associate principals, and other administrators all too frequently are viewed by teachers, because of their lack of experience and subject-related intellectual credentials, as quite isolated from them. This experiential and intellectual issue is theoretically solved in the person of the department chair. The academic resistance that teachers hold about principals is absent in their relationship with their department heads. The head's academic expertise provides cement which can hold the department's teachers together, promoting its insulation from outside influence, its autonomy, and its opportunity for self-direction, thus providing leadership possibilities for heads.

Alfonso (1983) posits that the point of entry with secondary school teachers, if not always, most frequently is through their subject area department. Thus, in addition to the organizational structure, expertise in the subject area provides a ready-made possibility for the department head to perform as leader and change facilitator. This rational view of the

department head's potential role seems widely held by the professional community and by the public at large.

Perceptions by school administrators and teachers. Like those who view the departmental structure of high schools as a positive factor that supports departmental change, many high school principals and assistant principals concede leadership and decision-making power to the department head. They see the head as one who manages personnel and a budget and distributes resources, thus deriving power to influence teachers. There is, of course, a wide variation in the amount and degree to which the head utilizes this distributive power and exercises leadership, management, and decisionmaking; however, many principals report that their department heads have a great deal of responsibility for "making things go right" in their departments, without intervention from administrators. Administrators also view heads as subject specialists who know their subject and who know their teacher colleagues. For these reasons, many administrators tend to view the department head position as a locus of power and influence, although the power may not be formalized.

Teachers hold a mixed view of heads. While some teachers accede significant power to their department heads, others view them more as teaching colleagues. But because of the heads' differentiating title, many teachers look to this person as responsible for making the system work and for facilitating the work they must all do. Many teachers report to the head in the event of their absence. If school leave is to be sought, it is done frequently through the office of the head, rather than through the school's central office. Since most heads hold the keys to the supply room, the requisition forms for materials, and the budget, teachers view them with a measure of authority. It should be noted again that this view is not uniformly held by all teachers.

Perceptions by the department heads. Before we began our high school studies, several department heads we knew expressed their views. "Actually, I'm just a conduit for sending management and logistical messages to teachers," one department head expressed. Heads saw their typical responsibilities of communicating and coordinating as a poor platform for exercising leadership. On the whole, they did not tend to see their role as carrying any power or authority that would support their activity as an agent for change in their departments. These early expressions reinforced our curiosity and intensified our interest in department heads because there were some heads who were guiding some change in their departments by utilizing the informal "cement" power, provided by their coordinating responsibilities.

Consistent Role Inconsistency: Preview of the Department Head Study Findings

Our study has not confirmed any one prevailing view. Despite the general perceptions that department heads, by their placement in the particular organizational design of the high school, are in the driver's seat, reality does not parallel these perceptions. Even though principals believe that heads have power and can demonstrate leadership, and even though numerous principals could and do think they give heads power, we have not identified many examples of department heads that reflect these views. Some teachers describe their heads as associates and peers; others suggest that the role provides real possibilities for leadership activities. Teachers are not unanimous in their assessments. The most appropriate characterization of the department head role is its inconsistency in the way it is operationalized across heads within a school, within a district, and across all the districts we have studied. We have found great variability, and that is an accurate catchword for the role, we believe.

A Study of the Role of Department Heads in Change in High Schools

The findings we present in this paper are derived from 3 years of research in 30 American high schools, studies conducted by the Research on the Improvement Process (RIP) Program at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas at Austin.

An Overview of High School Change Studies

The RIP high school research has focused directly on the study of change, the kinds of changes taking place, and the role and influence of the various constituent groups on the change process in the high school context. The high schools included in the study were selected to represent the U.S geographically and to represent all sizes of schools, including large urban, suburban, medium city, and small rural schools. These schools were located in school districts that represent a cross section of American school systems.

In Year One, the Phase One study was exploratory in nature. Research staff visited in high schools to gain a sense of how the schools were organized, of the contextual factors that appeared to have importance for change efforts, and to ascertain if and what kinds of changes high schools were attempting.

The Year Two, Phase Two study was more focused in its design and conduct, wherein nine pairs of schools were investigated to learn where changes were originating, how change was managed, and where leadership for change efforts was supplied. This descriptive study provided a great deal of data that answered the study questions (Hall, Guzman, Hord, Huling-Austin, Rutherford, Stiegelbauer, 1984) and on which hypotheses could be generated.

The Year Three, Phase Three study was conducted to explore the roles of specific constituent groups in high school change and to understand the

interrelationships of the groups as they engaged in the process of school improvement. These groups included principals, assistant principals, department heads, teachers, and central office personnel. The findings related to the role of department heads across all three phases of the study provide the central messages of this section of the paper.

Data Sources and Analysis

This paper represents data accumulated from 30 schools involved in Phases I, II, and III of the study. The sites included department heads from a wide variety of academic and technical disciplines. In addition to the math, English, science, and social sciences heads, data were collected from the heads of business education, vocational education, industrial arts, performing arts, and many more. Some of these departments ranged in size from 22 English teachers to 4 business education staff. Data about department heads were collected not only from self-report interviews with the heads about their role, but also from interviews with teachers, principals, district office personnel, and students to gain their perceptions and to cross verify the data. All interviews were tape recorded. From this pool of data, behaviors of department heads were identified and grouped into categories based on functions. Conversations with staff of Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland, about their materials and policies regarding the role and expectations of Resource Teachers (their title for department heads) contributed significantly to the framework developed for this paper and the analysis of these data. The categories of functions developed were:

1. Serves as communication liaison
2. Serves as department manager
3. Assists teachers in improvement of their instructional performance

4. Participates in program improvement and change

5. Fosters cooperative relationships.

To further refine the data, a subsample was selected for additional analysis. Four districts, chosen to represent community types, comprised the subsample drawn from Phase II of the study. Tapes of department head interviews from these districts (eight high schools) provided the base for additional data analysis. The data were coded according to department head functions, school level and district level policies, and relationships of heads with others. Additionally, the number of changes initiated by each department head was noted. Relevant comments by individual department heads were also recorded. This analysis provided data from which a continuum of the powerfulness of the department head in change was initially developed. The validity of the continuum was confirmed through data retrieved from the complete Phase I, II, and III samples.

Findings: What Is The Role?

This part of the paper describes the array of functions, noted above, that can contribute to the department head role. We examine the various behaviors in these functions that were found across the 30 high school sites studied. (See Figure 1 for complete inventory of behaviors in all functions.) Then we explain how the functions and their inventory of behaviors are put together to form six configurations of the department head role.

The majority of department heads are classroom teachers. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that for most heads there is a dual responsibility. On the one hand, there are department-related obligations; and on the other, a significant amount of the head's time, attention, and energy must be directed

Figure 1
Inventory of Behaviors by Functions

Function I. Serves as communication liaison
Communicates across the members of the department
Links the department and members upward to school administrators
Meets with principal and other school administrators
Links department upward to the district level
Carries information down to department
Coordinates course schedules
Places students in appropriate classes

Function II. Serves as department manager
Conducts department meetings on management issues
Designs the budget
Selects textbooks
Maintains material and equipment systems for procurement, storage, distribution, retrieval, and security
Assists teachers in use and care of equipment
Supervises clerical and instructional aides
Obtains, monitors, facilitates work of substitute teachers
Provides leadership in various areas
Interviews prospective teachers with administrators and makes recommendations
Assists principals in teacher evaluation
Assists principals in teacher evaluation conferences
Evaluates teachers
Hires and terminates teachers

Function III. Assists teachers in improving performance
Observes and assesses classroom teaching
Confers with teachers about observations
Assists teachers in instructional activities
Assumes leadership in planning inservice for department
Participates in planning school-level inservice activities
Supports, encourages, and creates opportunities for teachers' growth and development

Function IV. Participates in program improvement and change
Appraises program quality
Reviews and evaluates materials
Stays informed of new trends and programs
Stimulates teachers' awareness of research and program development
Provides leadership in curriculum development, implementation, revision
Assists in curriculum improvement and implementation of curriculum policies

Function V. Fosters cooperative relationships
Supports the relationships of colleagues, students, and parents
Fosters cohesive and cooperative interpersonal relationships
Confers with other departments informally
Develops cooperative relationships with other departments
Expresses acceptance, humor, praise as appropriate
Responds positively to challenges
Assists principal in public relations
Communicates with the community about the local school and school district

to classroom teaching duties and students.

Function I. Serves as a communication liaison. Department heads engage in communication that is both horizontal, across the members of the department, and vertical, up and down. Vertical communication, directed upward, can be observed through a variety of linking behaviors: to the school's administrators, to the district level subject supervisor to whom the department is responsible in matters of curriculum programs and instruction, and possibly to other district office personnel. To do this, some heads meet regularly with the principal and other school administrators and with subject supervisors. The purpose of upward communication is to keep the principals and others informed about the department, its administration, and programs.

The head is a liaison for downward communication in that messages from the school level and district level administrators and supervisors are carried to the department members by the head. The head may also coordinate the work of the department, school administration and counselors in the development of course schedules and the placement of students in appropriate classes.

Function II. Serves as department manager. In this part of the department head's role, it is expected that the head will conduct department meetings that focus on matters of management importance to the school and the department. Such items would include the design of an acceptable budget and accommodations of department teachers' budget requests, and selection of textbooks. The head also maintains a system for procurement, storage, distribution, retrieval, and security of materials and equipment. Assisting teachers in the use and care of equipment is another dimension of this function. Supervising any clerical or instructional aides that may be assigned to the department is another dimension, as is the procurement, monitoring, and facilitating of the work of substitute teachers. In this

latter case, checking and interpreting the lesson plans of the regular teacher to the substitute would be typical.

Some heads participate with administrators in interviewing and recommending prospective teachers for the department. Additionally, some assist their principals in the evaluation of teachers and may participate in teacher's evaluation conferences. Other department heads, though few in number in the sample, hold the rank of administrator and, in this case, may very likely have the responsibility to hire teachers for the department and to be the teachers' official evaluator, soliciting advice and counsel from the principal when needed.

Function III. Assists teachers in improvement of their instructional performance. To fulfill this function, the head visits classes for the purpose of assessing instructional quality and confers with teachers about the observations. The head participates with teachers and/or district level subject supervisors in planning school level inservice activities and assumes the leadership role in planning those of the department. The head works directly with teachers to assist them in a host of instruction-related activities: interpreting diagnostic test results to assess each student's abilities; adapting the district program to the needs of the local school; helping to plan for each classroom instructional group through adaptation of the curriculum to the needs of the individual students; developing daily and long-range plans; organizing and managing the classroom; developing skills and techniques of instruction; making productive use of aides, volunteer parents, and others; selecting, locating, obtaining, and using instructional materials and equipment; developing skills in self-evaluation and self-improvement; establishing positive relationships with students, and involving students in their program planning and selection. The head supports, encourages, and

creates opportunities for teachers' ongoing professional growth and development.

Function IV. Participates in program improvement and change. In this function the head acts in a variety of ways to contribute to improvement. One of these activities is in providing leadership in departmental curriculum development, implementation, and revision. Heads stay informed of new trends and programs in their subject field. They stimulate their teachers' awareness of research and program development in their discipline. Heads may review and evaluate instructional materials at the school and district levels, and appraise program quality. Heads assist in district and local level curriculum improvement efforts, and in the implementation of policies regarding curriculum.

Function V. Fosters cooperative relationships. The head works in this area to support the relationships of colleagues, students, and parents. Helping to foster a cohesive and cooperative pattern of interpersonal relationships within the department is a dimension of this function, as well as developing cooperative relationships with other departments. The head confers frequently with members of the department on an informal basis, and expresses acceptance, praise, and humor as appropriate. To foster healthy department morale, heads put problems in perspective; they respond positively to challenges and work effectively with people. For reaching the goals of good working relationships, they reach out to make parents and the community feel a part of the school. They communicate with the community about the local school and about the other schools in the district.

Findings: Cumulative Function Configurations

In the preceding section we presented an array of department head behaviors that we have seen. We organized the behaviors that were related to

each other into functions, but all behaviors in a function group may not necessarily be present in a particular department head's operationalization of the role. We now present groupings, or configurations, of the functions that we have observed in the department head role in high schools. Each configuration is a description of an actual department head, used as an example. We present six configurations that seem to be reasonably different, but that also appear to capture all the heads in our three-phase study.

Each of the six department head configurations (Figure 2) seem to lie along a continuum composed of less and more of the functions. More functions appear to contribute to a larger and more influential role and add to the power and status of the head. We discuss the six configurations below.

Communicator. Dr. Wesley Michaels is the chairman of the math department at Solar Beach High School. The high school is 1 of 15 high schools in a large southeastern district that has a very active staff development department designed to provide both district-wide and school-based inservice programs. These programs seemed not to touch the teachers in the math department at Solar Beach, and no efforts were initiated for making inservice available, either by teachers, by Michaels, or by school administrators of this suburban school.

As a department head, Michaels was given one class period per day to devote to math department duties. In addition, a stipend determined by the number of teachers in the department was provided. There was no job description of the department head role at the district level, and expectations from the school administration were ambiguous. Michaels served his department as a liaison, Function I. He received memoranda from the district administrative office and passed these on to teachers, as well as communicating with them regarding school level matters. He attended meetings

Figure 2: Configurations of the Department Head Role

Functions	Roles					
	Communicator	Coordinator Manager	Emerging Assister	Teacher Improver	Program Improver	Evaluating Administrator
I. Serves as communication liaison	*	*	*	*	*	*
II. Serves as department manager		*	*	*	*	*[1]
III. Assists teachers in improving performance				*	*	*
IV. Participates in program improvement and change					*	*
V. Fosters cooperative relationships			*		*	*

[1]The distinction between the Program Improver and Evaluating Administrator is in Function II. The Evaluating Administrator holds hiring/firing authority, not given to the Program Improver.

with other heads at the school chaired by the principal or assistant principals; he attended district meetings of all the math heads. He disseminated information from these meetings down to teachers. The principal relied on him to communicate to him about what was happening at the district level.

Michaels also engaged in vertical communication up the channel by serving as an advocate for teachers. He listened to their needs, was a mediator between teachers and school administrators, and was the voice box of the teachers at the district level regarding district priorities and plans, and expressed their opinions and concerns about such matters. He called meetings of the department's teachers to discuss policy and other issues, to relay information, or to solicit their input in order to transmit it up the line. His total repertoire of behaviors came from Function I (Serves as communication liaison).

Like his fellow teachers who were receiving no professional development, Michaels received neither preparation nor training for his department head role. Since there was no district policy for selecting heads, he was selected by the principal and confirmed by the teachers.

Coordinator Manager. The English department at Washington High School is chaired by Elizabeth Bostick. Bostick has her master's degree and has been head of the department for the 3 years since the principal asked her to serve as head. She believes she is a good manager for her department, in terms of inventorying and surveying teachers for equipment and materials needs. These she orders, in addition to texts and other resources. She discards outdated texts and materials, and arranges and stocks the storerooms.

Bostick is in charge of decisions about which teachers get first priorities of materials and of deciding who gets how much of what paper,

books, media, and other resources. In this regard, she has some vestige of power.

Like Michaels, she attends school level meetings of all department heads and communicates the results to her 20 teachers. This she does by written memoranda, as she seldom calls meetings of all her teachers. "They don't have time," she says, and she tries to protect them against meetings. This midwestern medium city district does not call all department heads together; thus, there is no horizontal sharing among English heads. Vertical communication is limited to serving as a pipeline up and down the school organizational chart.

There is no release time, no extra salary, no job description at any level, and no training to prepare heads in this district for this managing role. Bostick rejected any notion of the role as involving substantive work on instruction with teachers. She said she would be very uncomfortable observing or assisting teachers since she did not have the privilege of evaluating teachers. Clearly, her configuration is made up of Functions I (Communication liaison) and II (Department manager).

Emerging Assister. Phillip Davies is a head in the same system as Bostick, a school system that provides no time, stipend, policy, or training for department heads. Davies is a well-seasoned head of the social sciences department and close to the principal's ear. He is regularly sought by the principal to give advice and counsel about matters at Washington High School; thus, he feels quite secure in his position and utilization of Functions I and II. He spends some considerable energy locating opportunities for his students to attend events and to participate in activities that will enhance their social sciences learning. Similarly, Davies finds possibilities for

some of his social sciences department teachers to attend meetings and conferences that will contribute to their growth.

The teachers have indicated their interest in learning new ideas and techniques through peer observation. Davies has seized this opportunity to establish a formal procedure whereby teachers inform him when they will be teaching particular topics and using specific instructional strategies. He then informs the other staff of upcoming opportunities, and those who are particularly interested and can be free of their class responsibility go to visit and observe their colleagues.

Davies has a history of behaviors in Function V (Fostering cooperative relationships) as he brings students together to attend social science educational functions. Related to this he works with parents and encourages their participation in the social sciences program, particularly as it relates to providing opportunities for students to experience expanded activities outside of class. Now, recently he has been working on fostering relationships within the department as a stronger basis for peer teacher visitation. The social science teachers are housed in the high school in a common wing of the building and Davies encourages teachers to regularly stop by the departmental office which serves as a common meeting place. He feels this will contribute to more department cohesion. Many of the social science teachers have a common lunch period and converse nearly daily on some department topic.

Davies and the teachers are hoping to do some visitation in other schools. Unlike the other heads in this school, Davies attends district-wide bi-monthly meetings of the heads of social science departments, an anomaly in the district. Davies has been active in promoting these meetings which occur after the duty day, but which give heads the opportunity to share and compare

experiences and activities. As a result of these relationships and developing network, Davies is hopeful of making cross-school visitation a reality.

Teacher Improver. In the science department Robin Hedges is chairperson. He is supported in the role by 1 hour a day release time from class and a duty day lengthened by 1 half hour and 2 extra weeks added to the duty year. He is compensated by an increased salary. District policy articulates the expectations for the department head role, and inservice is provided for department heads. Some of Hedges' colleagues who are chairs of other departments regularly observe teachers and have feedback sessions, but typically develop no improvement objectives with teachers as a result. "I hope they take suggestions and do it voluntarily," they say. "Even though the district tells us to act to help teachers improve, we really have no clout because we don't hire or fire them." Many heads say that they have a concern about disturbing good relationships with their teachers, and this causes them to be quite moderate in their approach to teachers. Other heads invite teachers to observe them or other teachers teaching, to gain understanding about a teaching problem. The head may serve as a model in this case.

Hedges seems to have found workable techniques with his teachers. He provides them thoroughly with "down" travelling information and serves them visibly and tenaciously in their point of view up the channel, Function I (Communication liaison). He has built their science facility into a well-equipped and managed laboratory/workplace, Function II (Department manager). He exemplifies Function III (Assists teachers in improving) by using various strategies. With some teachers he introduces new ideas, demonstrates frequently how to teach and team teaches with them. With one teacher he has been spending alternate days teaching her a new computer-based course so that it will continue to be offered to students. He is working

closely with three teachers in planning, organizing, and structuring lessons so that higher level thinking skills will be included.

One particular teacher is receiving a considerable amount of Hedges' attention. This biology teacher has been identified as in need of help in instruction. Hedges has been working with him in a focused way, developing plans, observing his classroom teaching performance, identifying in feedback sessions "poor" teaching. Together, they make a plan for improvement that is based on a strategy of incremental change over time. With the biology teacher, Hedges is careful to specify areas to be attended to and provides a time line of expectations. He monitors to ascertain if change has occurred, and then continues to coach depending on the results of monitoring. Hedges says this is a slow process, requiring his patience and abundant persuasion.

Program Improver. "As department head I can encourage, teach, lead, foster, but I cannot demand." That's exactly what language arts department head Beatrice Benson does -- leading, fostering, teaching, encouraging, in that order -- preceded by recognizing students' difficulties in reading and analyzing the secondary school reading program. In this district one of the department head's responsibilities is to be the person responsible for making research findings and new and different approaches to teaching accessible to the department's teachers. Thus, new knowledge is typically sought and shared by Benson. She found the "experience story approach" at the elementary school and thought it could be a possibility for helping high school youngsters read better. A second, and equally useful, resource was a local university professor of curriculum theory. Collaboratively Benson and the professor developed a writing program built on the assumption that writing and reading are inextricably linked, and the one would impact the other.

Having exercised leadership in developing a new program, Benson's push now was to foster, teach, encourage its use. "A difficulty that reflects how high schools work is I cannot now say, 'You will teach this.'" Half the teachers were persuaded to volunteer the first year, and they were provided 10 weeks of after-school, hour-long inservice in how to teach the program. "You can't give one 3-hour shot and think you've done it. Training must be incremental and spread out and taught like you would teach anyone anything. Staff development is crucial." An experimental/control group study was done, with pre/post reading and writing scores of students as the dependent variable. The substantial differences in scores of the treatment group was celebrated, and all but a couple of the remainder of the faculty received training and began use of the program. Now it's old hat and now new; it's an institutionalized part of the language arts program.

Benson serves as the link between her department and a wide network of administrators, district curriculum supervisors, university consultants, and others. Benson views herself as the department's pipeline to the world, Function I (Communication liaison). She keeps them informed and in touch. Since she teaches only two classes a day, she has abundant time to keep the department well managed and running smoothly, Function II (Department manager). Functions III (Assists teachers in improving) and IV (Participates in program improvement and change) are expressed, for instance, in the development of the reading/writing program and in the inservice program she supplied to train her teachers in the new techniques of the new program. The foundation of this department head's work rests on her continual relationship building across her department and with other department heads in the school. She believes that collegial relationships can help her sell her programs to teachers, Function V (Fostering cooperative relationships). This department

head is rewarded for her efforts by a salary commensurate with the assistant principals. She came to her department head role through a rigorous but clearly articulated procedure of qualifying examinations and interview. Assignments, promotions, and role expectations are precisely set forth by the district.

Evaluating Administrator. Clear school and district policies enumerate Josh Kendall's department leadership status. He is classified as an administrator and as such he provides leadership for the department's educational programs. He does this during his one period a day release time designated for departmental responsibilities. He hires and terminates teachers in his department. He provides the communication network for the department, Function I (Communication liaison). He does the accounting, ordering, and inventorying of materials and equipment and is also responsible for repairs, Function II (Department manager). He works with teachers on instructional problems, Function III (Assists teachers in improving). He monitors teachers progress through observing instruction and using stated criteria for assessing teacher performance. A feedback conference follows the observation. Out of this process teachers are clearly evaluated in terms of instructional improvement. Josh provides comments and suggestions to teachers in the feedback session. He looks for improvement on his next visit on those items specified as current problems. He recommends frequently that teachers videotape themselves so they can have a self-evaluation technique.

Developing and delivering curriculum and new programs for special student populations is another part of Kendall's work, Function IV (Participates in program improvement and change). He is responsible for the development of a philosophy of curriculum evaluation and change. Kendall states that department heads provide services as well as leadership, and that, in any

case, they are a strong group. In his position as a line rather than a staff person, he has a special relationship with teachers, which he is careful to nurture and attend to, Function V (Fostering cooperative relationships).

It is important to note that there is not an equal frequency distribution of department heads across the configuration types. In our sample, frequency decreases across the continuum of configurations, left to right. This means that the Communicator heads are most abundant while the Evaluating Administrators are quite rare. The continuum also reflects the amount of power provided to department heads in guiding change (Figure 3).

In Figure 3 we have indicated by labels how the accumulation of additional functions increases the power of the role. We have chosen to label the Communicator and the Coordinator types of department heads as "Powerless," regarding the facilitation of teachers' work and guiding their change of practice. Heads in these roles quite likely are in schools where policy that would define the department head role as that of an agent for teachers' change is lacking.

For the Emerging Assister, Teacher Improver, and Program Improver Configurations, we classify these as "Persuasive." To explain, in the case of the Emerging Assister, Davies is taking some steps to facilitate teachers' interest in changing their practice, though he is not supported in his efforts by school or district expectations. The Teacher Improver and Program Improver are clearly guiding and facilitating change and they do this with infinite skill and a policy that charges them to do so. But each says that in the final analysis, the teacher can reject their help or give little attention, since they have no real power to back up their assistance efforts.

The most powerful department head role is the Evaluating Administrator. This configuration looks identical in its functions to that of Program

Figure 3: Accumulating Power of Role Configurations

	Roles					
	Powerless			Persuasive		Powerful
	Communicator	Coordinator Manager	Emerging Assister	Teacher Improver	Program Improver	Evaluating Administrator
Functions						
I. Serves as communication liaison	*	*	*	*	*	*
II. Serves as department manager		*	*	*	*	*[1]
III. Assists teachers in improving performance				*	*	*
IV. Participates in program improvement and change					*	*
V. Fosters cooperative relationships			*		*	*

[1]The distinction between the Program Improver and Evaluating Administrator is in Function II. The Evaluating Administrator holds hiring/firing authority. not given to the Program Improver.

Improver. However, the Evaluating Administrators' behaviors are defined by policy and these persons have the responsibility and privilege to hire and fire. This makes them a line administrator and gives them direct authority over teachers; undoubtedly, an incentive to listen, consider, and probably act on department heads' suggestions for change of practice. Such a policy and its linked behaviors were rarely present in the data.

Findings: What Shapes The Role?

While the department head might wish to engage in particular behaviors and functions, there are situational factors beyond his/her control that influence the possibilities of the role. The principal's policies or district policy, for instance, may shape the role in ways which mandate certain behaviors while discouraging others. For example, a principal may appoint department heads in the school and then restrict them to communicator/liaison activities. In another case, district policies may enumerate specific responsibilities which promote and encourage department heads to take an active role in program improvement and change. The principal, district and other influences external to the school may represent the sources from which fiscal rewards, training, and other influential factors come (Figure 4). In Figure 4 the functions of the six configurations are noted, as are situational factors that are part of the context of the heads of that type.

Situational factors. Situational factors can include many things. In our analysis of the head's role the presence or absence of three factors -- policy, monetary compensation, and slack time -- seemed to be particularly influencial related to specific role functions. Policy can be formulated at either the district or building level. The existence of policies that clearly define the job as an instructional helper supports the development of the department head's role as an improver of programs and teachers. However, in

Figure 4: Factors That Influence The Department Head Role

	Powerless		Persuasive			Powerful
	Communicator	Coordinator Manager	Emerging Assister	Teacher Improver	Program Improver	Evaluating Administrator
Role Functions	I	I, II	I, II, V	I, II, III	I, II, III IV, V	I, II, III IV, V
Situational Factors	Time provided	No time	No time	Time provided	Time provided (teaches only 1 or 2 classes)	Time provided
	Stipend provided	No stipend	No stipend	Stipend provided	Stipend provided	Stipend provided
	No policy	No policy	No policy	Policy clear	Policy clear	Policy clear
	No training	No training	No training	Training provided	Training provided	Training provided

the absence of formal policy, a department head took action in providing inservice to teachers. This function of assisting teachers emerged and developed because the department head had high energy, credibility with faculty, and the principal allowed the head to develop and implement such programs. The principal did not actively support the activity, but his lack of resistance served as passive acceptance. To rely on passive acceptance in order to do those things necessary for guiding change cannot realistically be supported. Districts and schools must formalize policy in order to shape the role of department head in guiding change.

When the department head significantly participates in guiding teachers' instructional change, monetary compensation seems to be present. The compensation ranges from a few hundred dollars in one district to a district in which a department head receives only $50 less than an assistant principal. Even more important than monetary compensation, however, is the inclusion of slack time in the schedule for a department head. This time is crucial in making it possible for the department head to do such things as observe teachers' performance in classrooms. Time is crucial for department head activities that foster teachers' professional growth and development, and for developing the viability of the department head as an instructional leader and improver. It is extremely difficult to do these things unless time is provided in which to do them. This is an obvious fact.

An additional factor that may influence the department head role is training or lack of training for the role. The study revealed few training opportunities specifically designed for department heads. Usually individuals were placed in the position with few guidelines, no preparation, and only a vague idea of the purpose of the role. More than any other factor, the paucity of training probably allows the role to be idiosyncratically shaped.

All too frequently the department head operates within parameters that are loosely defined and difficult to articulate. Numerous situational factors influence the head in ways that foster or inhibit the development of the head as a facilitator of teachers' instructional practices. Yet, a few individuals emerge under the worst of circumstances as influential department heads.

Selection. The process determining who enters the department head role can significantly influence who is placed in the role and thus what the role can become. In some districts persons are typically able to actively seek the department head position either through examination or volunteering. In other districts, the road to the department head role includes election by peers and a 3-year rotation cycle. A principal may appoint an individual who does not truly desire to function as a department head, or who is not credible with other teachers. The selection process may discourage some individuals who would be very capable from pursuing the role because of perceived entry difficulties. On the other hand, informal selection procedures may encourage individuals to enter into what is perceived as an undemanding role. These same selection circumstances may foster entry of truly competent individuals in the role. In either case, selection can be a critical factor in the development of the department head role.

Summary. With no time, no fiscal remuneration, and no formal job description, teachers conferred with the title of department chair or head are typically able to assume the role of communicator, Function I. With no benefits whatsoever, including no allocated time in the duty day or extension of the duty year, they may also serve as Manager, Function II. Some individuals are also able to provide informal instructional help and guidance to other teachers without this function being designated in their role. However, because it lacks formalized power, the impact of such assistance may

be extremely limited and offered only sporadically. Therefore, if Functions III and IV, those of assisting teacher's improvement and growth, and facilitating program improvement and change, are to be significantly developed, two things are essential: 1) formally provided time, and 2) policies which enunciate the expectations and which confer authority to engage in these functions. Fiscal remuneration adds the authority aura and status.

Findings: Relationships With Others

As with other phases of the data analyses, the relationships of department heads to others are wide ranging. Of particular interest are the relationships between department heads and district office personnel, the principal, teachers, and other department heads.

Other department heads. In our intensive subsample of 8 and the broader sample of 30 schools, we found that department heads related with each other on two levels: building and district. Across the district some department heads met as part of district requirements to coordinate each school's curriculum to larger goals, or they met in response to tasks associated with a specific innovation. For example, business heads met in order to update their district goals and objectives from a vocation orientation to more rigorous, academic standards. Within buildings, department heads rarely met with one another without an outside impetus. For example, as part of a principals' cabinet, department heads communicated with one another. On their own, department heads seem not to coordinate with or seek help from other department heads outside of their academic speciality.

The district office. The department head often serves as the communication link between the district office and teachers. For this purpose, several districts held monthly department head meetings in which information was shared for dissemination at the building level. Some of the

meetings were decision making and others were merely for transmitting information. On the other hand, in several districts department heads had no direct, regular communication with personnel in the district office at all. In these situations information was usually passed through the principal to the department head, then to the teachers.

The principal. Our data suggest that department heads have an either-or relationship with the building principal -- either they are part of a team that meets on some regular basis with the principal, or they see him/her only as specific need arises. Regular meetings with principals may be truly powerful decision-making and decision-sharing sessions, or they may serve only for funneling information from the top down -- two very different relationships. Some principals who do not engage in formal, regular meetings with department heads as a group may still include some heads in the decision-making process. Some department heads, because of longevity or particular ability, became invaluable parts of the principal's information management team. For example, in one school a department head became a principal's trusted advisor after persisting in asking the principal for numerous changes in departmental course offerings, although this was not the standard procedure for such requests. The changes were implemented with minimal demand on the building administrators and were accepted by students and staff. The principal perceived the department head as successful and came to rely on the head's input in other areas usually not delegated to the head, such as hiring and scheduling.

The department teachers. The relationship of the department head with teachers in their department seems to hinge on the heads' perception of their own role. If department heads considered themselves to be primarily managers/supply orderers, then their relationships with teachers were usually

described as "friendly" or as, "I get along with my teachers and everyone." However, if the department heads perceived their role as being instructional assistants, their relationships with teachers were generally described as "professional," and interchange was portrayed as more formal. It was interesting when analyzing teachers' interview data to note that no department heads were described by teachers as autocratic.

Implications and Recommendations

We have presented some ideas about the way department heads go about their work. We organized their behaviors as groups of functions. We described some configurations of the functions and provided examples of the ways the department head role is expressed in schools. We have discussed the influence, or lack of influence, of various situational factors. What are some messages from these data about the department head role that serve to inform us, pique our interest, cause us to speculate, or stimulate us to additional inquiry?

The Department Head As A Guide For Change

Even within the "powerless" configurations, there are additional contextual factors that can foster the department head's role in change. In the "persuasive" configurations, these same contextual advantages could strengthen the head's role in guiding change.

The department as a community. Of interest to school administrators who wish to build cohesive departments is a clue about supportive contexts. In our studies, the location or placement of the department members within the building appeared to be a factor in department heads' influence. We noted that those departments whose teachers were housed in close proximity and that had an office or workrooms specifically for their teachers' use had more

department member interaction and exchange. Further, the department head in this situation seemed able to exercise influence because of frequent and regular contact. There were some departments scattered vertically and horizontally across the building. This resulted in department individuals rarely seeing each other. Some heads whose departments were separated spatially, regularly delivered messages and materials to teachers' rooms in order to take the occasion for quick monitoring or to interact personally. Under these circumstances, the opportunity for guiding a change process faded away in the time between "circuit" runs by the head.

Teacher growth. There is a widely held view in high schools that teachers are subject-centered experts. Many have master's degrees, long years of teaching, and thus have earned their "terminal" degree. These notions seem to suggest to teachers that they require no further attention to professional development. This view is reinforced by heads who appear to lack a common language to use in talking with teachers about instruction. In their comments, department heads expressed no common image of effective instruction and appeared to know little (and have not been trained) about instructional supervision and improvement. We would suggest that heads need as a group to discuss instruction, in addition to content. By providing this type of support, the scope of the head's role could expand.

The department head as a school improver. In most cases, the department head is a responder to other change initiators. Heads lament their lack of time to engage in the planning and implementation of change. This unavailability of time is supported in our data. Monitoring, supporting, and facilitating all take time. Many heads lack not only time to fill their roles effectively, but also any policy, or broad-based expectations that they will be an initiator or facilitator of change in teachers' practice. To become an

active guide for change the department head must be seen by administrators and teachers as responsible for improvement in the school.

Policy Development

Among the most significant findings in our study was the influence of a formalized policy that articulates the scope of department head's power to guide change. While policy does not insure that heads will embrace the function of change facilitator, it does promote the function as the norm. Policy development is needed in many areas. We discuss a few policies that could realistically be implemented and which promote the improvement of practice.

The absence of teacher inservice. Few heads report the existence of inservice programs within their department. They do report providing teachers with an overview of new curriculum, doing master lessons and being a "cheerleader." Many heads are not seen as instruction-oriented nor as being concerned with teachers' professional development. Given that many heads have only one hour for the assessment, planning, design and operation of inservice sessions, in addition to their other duties, it is understandable that little is occurring. There also appears to be little expectation that heads will be responsible for teacher growth. If heads are to become involved in change, they must become involved as leaders of their fellow teachers in pertinent inservice presentations. Policy development is needed to insure the time and authority necessary to participate in this function.

Authority to act. Several principals suggested that in order for heads to have a real role in school and teacher change, they need the clout to support their assistance efforts with teachers. More specifically, this probably means moving department heads into an administrator category with

line authority to evaluate teachers. Many observers of high schools see this arrangement on the horizon.

Time to act. If department heads are to become active in guiding the change process, Functions III (Assists teachers in improving performance), IV (Participates in program improvement and change) and V (Fosters cooperative relationships) need to be incorporated into existing configurations. However, simply delegating these functions will not insure action. Time must be provided as a matter of policy formulation, along with authority to act. Then department head action in change is more likely to occur.

The Critical Elements

The implementation of policies that clearly define the role of the department head as a facilitator of change sets the stage for action. Unfortunately, establishing the policy does not guarantee that heads will develop into change facilitators. Rather, specific training to clarify expectations and to provide models will increase the likelihood. Coupled with monitoring to insure role implementation, the stage will be set, roles will be developed and change will have more chance for success. This means that staff development and monitoring must be provided to department heads after the formulation of clear policies.

Staff development for department heads. The department heads in our study articulated numerous suggestions concerning their own needs for inservice. Among those emphasized were training in the observation of teachers and methods for collection of meaningful data. Heads wanted to be able to look into classrooms, identify existing problems and support the identification with data. Additional nominations for inservice were workshops on interpersonal relations and how to be a change agent. There was a

reoccurring suggestion to combine the two skills in order to learn how to work together with a teacher to bring about a meaningful professional change.

Department heads expressed a need to learn to nurture departments' capacity to work on common goals and to foster cooperation in work. Problem-solving skills for working in groups was another dimension of need. Staff development through independent learning and growth (not always in a group setting) was cited as another specific department head need. Finally, time and training for contemplation and reflection on the issues and problems of the department was an often heard plea.

Monitoring of department heads. From change process research it is now clear that training is one essential element in helping people to develop new knowledge and skills and to perform in new ways. What is also clear is that training alone is not enough (Hord, Huling & Stiegelbauer, 1983). This, we believe, applies also to department heads in high schools.

We identified sites where department heads functioned as teacher assisters and program improvers, where these roles were defined by policy and supported by staff development. Staff development that targeted such role definition appeared to increase the probability that heads would acquire skills and insights and work with teachers in more influential ways, resulting in improved teacher performance.

However, there is no unequivocal assurance that department heads will be able to carry out these functions even though they are supported by policy and encouraged through inservice programs. Critical to the implementation of these functions may be additional attention that combines regular monitoring that serves to assess heads' needs and the provision of coaching and consultation (Joyce & Showers, 1982) that supports the development of the expected role configuration, i.e., teacher and program improver.

Who supplies the monitoring and support for the heads? Obvious persons at the school site are high school principals or assistant principals. In some of our study schools, the principals and the two (or three) assistant principals divided the departments among themselves and identified those departments with which they would be more closely aligned administratively. Such administrators are in a key position to provide proactive monitoring, supporting, and facilitating to heads as they are changing their role practice. A monitoring and nurturing facilitator is as necessary to heads as they change their role as a facilitator (the department head) is to teachers as they strive to make improvements. Other persons who could supply the support role to heads are district office curriculum coordinators or subject specialists for the particular head's discipline.

Research Needs

It is clear that studies focused on the department head are needed. The findings of this study provide a broad overview or mapping of what heads do and of the factors that seem to be relevant. More studies are needed that explore the relationships of the various factors to the behaviors of heads, and relate these to effects on teachers and change. Such studies should further illuminate the role, answering the questions: What functions do heads use in particular contexts with what effects? What selection processes are used and how does the selection process influence the role? What factors should be considered in the selection process? What are the training and professional development needs of heads? What kinds of policy and resources support and contribute to effective "headmanship"? How best can heads, school administrators, and teachers relate for purposes of change and improvement? In particular, what are the significant contextual factors related to the Evaluating Administrator department head role, and what effects are gained

from this role? What strategies can be recommended to heads for working with teachers to bring about their continuing growth and development?

Useful qualitative data that provides new insights into the department head role have been acquired from this study. What is required now are quantitative studies that provide more specificity and precision to inform questions about needed policy and resources for the development of the department head role.

In Conclusion

From department heads, classroom teachers, school and district level administrators, and a small number of students in 30 schools, data were collected about the roles that department heads play in change in high schools. From these data, behaviors of heads were identified and organized into functions that were then combined to describe the varying roles, from powerful to powerless, that department heads play in change.

We believe the department head role is a very viable one for facilitating the change process, and, consequently, a very promising one for assisting secondary school teachers and administrators in school improvement efforts. It behooves practitioners, policymakers, change researchers, and others studying high school reform to understand the possibilities. Just as important will be consideration of the preparation and support of individuals responsible for this role. We believe these issues warrant our immediate attention.

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HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: THEIR ROLE IN GUIDING CHANGE

Leslie Huling-Austin
Suzanne Stiegelbauer
Deborah Muscella

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
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HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: THEIR ROLE IN FACILITATING CHANGE[1,2]

Leslie Huling-Austin
Suzanne Stiegelbauer
Deborah Muscella

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas

Almost everyone, including researchers, agrees that the role of the high school principal is multifaceted, multidimensional, highly fragmented, and very busy. It is clear that if high schools are to improve and constructive change occur, someone must assume responsibility for guiding change efforts. While there is significant debate over whether it is realistic to expect high school principals to be instructional leaders in light of all of the other demands and responsibilities which must be handled by them, for better or worse, a large portion of the responsibility for guiding change in the high school falls squarely upon the shoulders of the building-level administrator(s).

This paper reports findings related to the roles of principals in guiding and facilitating change derived from a study of the Dynamics of Change in High Schools. This three-year study of more than 30 American high schools has been conducted by the Research on the Improvement Process (RIP) program of the

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[2]The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education. No endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas at Austin. The various change facilitating roles of principals found in the study schools are identified and discussed in the paper. In addition to a description of the various configurations of leadership found in high schools a description of how principals interact with other change facilitators in the process of school change is provided. The paper concludes with suggestions and recommendations for how the change facilitating roles of high school principals might be refined to increase the effectiveness of change efforts.

Related Literature

While a significant amount of literature has developed about the high school principal, the literature that is based on the research conducted on high school principals is really quite limited. Much of the research that has been conducted utilized paper and pencil surveys to focus on the demographic characteristics of principals and on self-assessments of how they spend their time.

Several recent studies, most of them sponsored by professional organizations for principals, offer descriptions of a variety of demographic characteristics of principals (Byrne, Hines & McCleary, 1978; Gorton & McIntyre, 1978; Pharis & Zakaiya, 1979; Valentine, et al., 1981). Generalizations that can be drawn from these findings are that the principalship continues to be a white, male-dominated profession, with most individuals having completed formal study beyond the master's degree. Most principals are between the ages of 45 and 54. A number of researchers have done small-scale studies on the personality characteristics of principals and have mentioned qualities such as initiative, confidence, security in themselves as persons, a high tolerance for ambiguity, and analytical ability.

Other studies have addressed the issue of how principals spend their time. One such recent study (Martin & Willower, 1981) reported that high school principals averaged 149.2 tasks in their work each day. These tasks were classified by Martin and Willower into 13 types of activities observed during the study. They reported the total time, average duration and percentage of total time for each activity. Howell (1981) compared the time spent by elementary, middle school and high school principals on tasks in various categories and found that all three groups spend significantly less on instructional leadership activities than on administrative activities. Another of Howell's findings was that principal's in each group consumed the most time in office responsibilities. Senior high principals reported that they spend less time with office responsibilities and more time with student relations than do principals in the other two groups. Earlier research by Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) and Wolcott (1973) also investigated the daily routine of the principal. The one common element that appears to be true of almost all principals, whether elementary or high school or whether city, small town, or suburban, is that their workday is very busy and highly unpredictable (Huling, Hall & Hord, 1982).

Another strand of research on principals focuses on the leadership role of the principal. A number of researchers (Deal & Celotti, 1977, 1980; Martin, 1980; McPartland & Karweit, 1979; Peterson, 1978; Sproull, 1977; Wolcott, 1973; Wolf, 1979) have found that instructional leadership is not a central focus of the real life practices of most principals. McNally (1974) noted that principals are not exercising to any considerable degree the instructional and program leadership function that is widely agreed to be their most important responsibility. Howell (1981) concludes that today's

principals are not and cannot be "instructional leaders" in the conventional sense.

Other researchers, while acknowledging the difficulty of the principal's situation, believe the answer to successful leadership lies in the principal's ability to make the best possible use of the discretionary time and resources that are available. Sarason (1971) found that principals do have considerable authority over how they use their time and resources, but differ in their knowledge and appreciation of its utility. He further contends that the degree of authority that principals have depends very heavily upon the use that they are able and willing to make of decision-making opportunities that do exist. In similar vein, Isherwood (1973) concluded from his observation of 15 secondary school principals that opportunities for the development and exercise of "informal authority" seem to exceed by far the formally designated powers and responsibilities of the principalship. Morris (1981) found from his research that there is much discretion available to the building administrator in education. He further concludes that there is much room at the school site level for flexibility and adaptability in the application of school system policy. Stewart (1982) claims that every job has demands and restraints, but that within these, leaders have many choices they can make.

Again, a large majority of the research on principal effectiveness and their role in leadership has been conducted at the elementary level. For example, Cotton and Savard (1980) reviewed 27 documents concerned with the principal's role as instructional leader. Out of these they located only seven studies that they judged to be both relevant and valid investigations of instructional leadership, and six of these focused on elementary schools. Cotton and Savard's study and others like it (Persell & Cookson, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Little, 1981; Stallings & Mohlmon, 1981) have

resulted in lists of behaviors that principals display which are believed to be associated with effectiveness. The Principal-Teacher Interaction (PTI) Study (Hall, et al., 1982) investigated the role of elementary principals in the facilitation of curriculum innovations. Unlike previous studies, this work provided a detailed description of the day-to-day interventions of principals and others involved in specific change efforts in elementary schools.

These recent studies are offering much needed insight into the activities of principals. However, they tend to focus mostly on elementary schools and tend not to provide the level of specificity needed by practitioners for planning and implementing change in high schools. Thus, more in-depth understanding of how high school principals might guide change in their schools was an immediate need.

The Change Facilitating Roles of Principals

The Dynamics of Change in High Schools study involved three phases. The data base for this paper was a set of 36 researcher reports from Phase II. In Phase I of the study researchers visited 12 high schools in various states to become more familiar with the organizational structure of high schools and the school improvement efforts taking place and to examine possible sources of information and strategies for data collection. In Phase II of the research, two high schools were visited in each of nine districts during the 1983-84 school year. Currently in Phase III a small number of districts are being visited in order to further investigate the similarities and differences in the change process of elementary and secondary schools, with special emphasis on the role of Central Office personnel.

Each of the nine Phase II districts was located in a different state in order to provide a wide geographic representation of the United States, and to include a variety of settings including urban, mid-size city, suburban, and rural districts. Two researchers worked in each high school and developed a detailed report of their impressions and findings (see Huling-Austin, 1984, for a description of the researcher reports). The reports consisted of four parts in which researchers documented the changes taking place at the school, nominated critical interventions in the change process, gave their impressions of a series of situational factors and their influence on change, and wrote a report on the leadership and management of change in the school. A secondary analysis of two of the four sections of each report was conducted for this paper. These sections were the situational factors section and the management of change portion of the write-ups. In the first section the researcher provided a description of various situational factors that had a potential influence on the school and then described the role each factor played in change in the school. One of the situational factors was the school's administration, therefore, this item was included in the data base for this paper. The management of change section required each researcher to compile a two to three-page report on how change was managed in the school and the role the principal played in facilitating change. These reports provided the most in-depth information related to the change facilitating roles of principals, the various configurations of leadership teams found in high schools, and how principals and other change facilitators interact.

Methodology

In order to analyze information about the change facilitating roles of principals, a coding scheme was devised and used to code the approximately 110 pages of typewritten text generated by study researchers in their descriptions

of the school administrators and their role in change. The coding scheme was derived from the data itself in that researchers first reviewed the data and compiled a list of the various roles of the principal and other school administrators in change. Roles that were highly similar were combined into a single role, and after this process was completed, a total of 15 distinct roles in change remained. The data were then coded into these 15 roles and the frequency of each role was tabulated.

Researchers then began to consider whether these roles could be classified into meaningful categories in order to facilitate the display and interpretation of the data. Several classification schemes were considered but the one selected as the best suited for this particular purpose was a framework that was developed in earlier research conducted by the RIP program (Hall, et al., 1984). This framework classifies behaviors related to the principal's role in school improvement into six larger dimensions or competency areas that are similar to those frequently described in the literature and among practitioners. The six categories included in the framework are vision and goal setting; structuring the school as a workplace; managing change; collaborating and delegating; decision-making; and guiding and supporting. The change facilitating roles of principals identified in this data set as classified into the six categories are:

Vision and Goal Setting

Establishing vision for school/communicating school priorities and goals
Initiating school-based change
Approving/disapproving proposals for change (gatekeeping)

Structuring the School as a Workplace

Defining Roles
Setting expectations for change
Determining the substance and frequency of faculty meetings

Managing Change

Serving as the in-house facilitator for changes which originate from the outside
Evaluating teacher performance and/or implementation
Protecting staff from overload

Collaborating and Delegating

Delegating responsibilities for change
Coordinating the work of the school-based administrative team

Decision Making

Functioning as a participant and facilitator in group decision making/ participatory management
Staffing the school

Guiding and Supporting

Providing teachers with support, materials, supplies, etc.
Serving as the PR person for the school

Findings

A total of 215 statements related to the 15 change facilitating roles of principals were identified in the analysis of the researcher write-ups, and to illustrate, examples of each role are taken directly from the data and displayed in Figure 1. Some of these examples demonstrate how the principal is not addressing or fulfilling these roles, and these examples are shown in brackets.

Of the 215 statements identified, 36 were statements about the principal not addressing or fulfilling certain roles. For purpose of this next analysis, these "non-examples" were removed from the data set leaving a total of 179. The number of examples of principals addressing each of the various roles in each dimension is shown in Figure 2. It is important to remember that the numbers of examples shown in Figure 2 do not reflect direct observations or principal self reports, but rather are the researcher's

Figure 1

Examples From The Data of Various Change Facilitating Roles of Principals

DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES
Vision and Goal Setting	
Establishing vision for school/communicating school priorities/goals	P. expressed overall school goals: 1) improve literacy skills; 2) give attention to weak areas of curriculum; 3) to help individuals with their instruction P makes clear that respect, task engagement, and self-discipline are everybody's business [P is not sure of himself, has few visions, does not see pushing teachers, students or community] [no sense of priority is being conveyed to teachers]
Initiating school-based change	Incorporated work study vocational education program with industry so students would have marketable skills Sought out program from district & brought program/training to school--viewed as important leader Initiated parent communication system *[P initiated only two changes in 7 yrs. & these were to eliminate existing programs.]

*[] indicates that the role is not being addressed or fulfilled.

DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES
Approving/disapproving proposals for change	Changes go through the principal in some way: either from department head for approval or from district for school-wide implementation Any change--even from district office --goes through P and vice principal for approval Regardless of the source of change or proposed change, the principal had knowledge of it and opportunity for approval or disapproval [Change within their classroom does not require special review or permission, though depending on the magnitude of it, they might discuss it with the principal]
Structuring The School As A Workplace	
Defining Roles	P is redesigning the role of the department heads to be more of an instructional leader [In regard to department heads, they were senior persons in the department and there was no expectation on their part or the principal's that they do more than attend to administrative details and communication]

DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES
Setting expectations for change	He reviewed results of achievement tests over the last 3 years and drafted a memo to department heads and teachers outlining his expectations and suggestions P says, "I do not plan to give my people a lot of harmony, happiness, or contentment"--he will keep pressing his staff to get things done [He heaves teachers to their own resources, but is open for discussion and approach if they solicit it]
Determining substance/ frequency of faculty mtgs.	A faculty meeting is held once a month Academic Council (department heads, Principal, vice principal) plan agenda for faculty meeting Faculty meeting held once a month
Serving as in-house facilitator for changes which originate from outside	brings in changes from district <u>but</u> supports them as if own creation P uses district goals for change to influence her goals for change [superficially responded to district initiatives for change but he had no overall plan]

	DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES
	Evaluating teacher performance and/or implementation	Two vice principals share equally with P in evaluation of teachers Two formal evaluations of each teacher are made each year, one by the principal and one by the assistant principal [He does not seem to do any formal evaluation of teachers, but said the school was small enough that he had a good idea what everyone was doing and sees all teachers in some capacity at least once a week]
	Protecting staff from overload	P is sensitive to teacher overload; thus, is unwilling to add his own changes in addition to those in district P questions what he does not like from district initiators [P expressed a concern to us that he feared the teachers might already be near overload and wanted us to try to get a feel for that as we talked to teachers
Collaborating and Delegating		
	Delegating responsibilities for change	P maintains school-wide persistence on tasks through: expectations of faculty, delegation of tasks, recognition of job well done Everyone has assigned responsibilities and is asked to carry out tasks without someone looking over their shoulder [No responsibilities to anyone for change; only routine tasks assigned

	DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLES
	Coordinating Work of School-Based Administrative Team	P meets with department heads on a regular basis to work out problems Vice principals have differing assignments and staff seem to know just whom to see about what [P is isolated from operation of school; school runs itself]
Decision Making		
	Functioning as a participant and facilitator in group decision making/ participatory mgt.	P consults with individuals or groups before making a change that would affect pattern of work Department heads, vice principals, and principal are planning and decision-making team for school Two structures: Senate and department head groups [Changes decreed by principal]
	Staffing School	In first few years: reassigned department heads, replaced all vice principals, and secretary so as to staff school with strong people P makes all hiring decisions, looks for self-starters who have self-starters who have creative approaches to problem solving and demonstrated professional competence [P realizes the need to fill upcoming vacancies with strong people but is concerned about how others might feel about his staffing choices]

DESCRIPTION OF ROLE	EXAMPLE
Guiding and Supporting	
Providing teachers with support, materials	Teachers characterize him as approachable and firm Teachers approach the principal and the board for financial needs for equipment, etc. If teachers legitimately needed something, the principal would see that they got it
Serving as Public Relations Person	Principal is front man who pushes academic progress by gaining positive publicity inside & outside the school Announces accomplishments to the media, Rotary Club, other community groups Views primary role as that of PR person

Figure 2: Change Facilitating Roles of Principals

	Frequency
Vision and Goal Setting	
Establishing vision for school/communicating school priorities and goals	13
Initiating school-based change	25
Approving/disapproving proposals for change (gatekeeping)	9
Subtotal	47
Structuring the School as a Workplace	
Defining Roles	7
Setting expectations for change	5
Determining the substance and frequency of faculty meetings	3
Subtotal	15
Managing Change	
Serving as the in-house facilitator for changes which originate from the outside	7
Evaluating teacher performance and/or implementation	5
Protecting staff from overload	8
Subtotal	20
Collaborating and Delegating	
Delegating responsibilities for change	10
Coordinating the work of the school-based administrative team	34
Subtotal	44
Decision Making	
Functioning as a participant and facilitator in group decision making/participatory management	25
Staffing the school	8
Subtotal	33
Guiding and Supporting	
Providing teachers with support, materials, supplies, etc.	5
Serving as the PR person for the school	15
Subtotal	20
TOTAL	179

perceptions of the principals' change facilitating roles based upon the data gathered during the site visit which included reports from the principals, teachers, and other school staff. For this reason, one must be cautious about making strong statements or comparisons about the numbers or percentages involved. However, keeping this caution in mind, trends in the data can provide useful insight into the various change facilitating roles of principals.

The two roles found most frequently in the data were coordinating the work of the school-based administrative team (N=34) and functioning as a participant in group decision-making/participatory management (N=25). Both of these roles relate to the managing and coordinating aspects of the principalship. In combination, these two roles account for approximately one-third of the total examples and it is the impression of the authors that this is an accurate reflection of what was encountered in the field by the research staff. The third most frequently found role was initiating school-based change (N=25). While earlier analysis of the data revealed that most of the changes found in high schools originated from outside the school rather than within (Rutherford & Huling-Austin, 1984), of those changes that originated within the school, a substantial number were initiated by the principal. This being the case, it is not surprising that the frequency for this role was as high as it was.

The role which had the lowest frequency was determining the substance and frequency of faculty meetings (N=3). While certainly principals conduct many faculty meetings, it appears that they do not often use them as a means of promoting change, but rather more often meet with smaller groups of other school administrators, department heads and selected representatives of the faculty. When this was the case, this role was coded as coordinating the work

of the school-based administrative team or functioning as a participant and facilitator of group decision-making (depending upon the nature of the activity), the two most frequently cited roles. Three other roles were seldomly identified in the data--setting expectations for change (N=5), providing teachers with support, materials, supplies, etc. (N=5), and evaluating teacher performance (N=5). Each of these findings is noteworthy. It is often assumed by educators and others that the principal plays a primary role in establishing expectations for the faculty and staff (Along this same line, the number of examples found of defining roles (N=7) was also quite small contributing to a very low total (N=15) for the category of structuring the school as a workplace.). In regard to providing teachers with support, materials, supplies, etc., the support aspect of this type of activity which is sometimes referred to as coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1982) or consultation and reinforcement (Hord, Huling, & Stiegelbauer, 1983) is often linked to implementation success. Finally, the low frequency of evaluating teacher performance and/or implementation is surprising in that evaluating teachers is frequently one of the first tasks mentioned by persons who are asked to describe the principal's job.

Configurations of Leadership

In addition to examining the change facilitating roles of principals, a second purpose of this paper was to investigate the various configurations of leadership teams found in high schools and how principals and other change facilitators interact in the process of school change. Therefore, the data base was examined in a different way in order to address these issues.

Methodology

In this analysis, researchers reviewed the same sections of the researcher reports for descriptions of who was involved in facilitating change and if that facilitation constituted a kind of "leadership team." Secondly, researchers looked at the role of the principal in relation to these teams, if they existed, and how that role differed from the principal's role in administration. Last, researchers looked at the different patterns of operation present in the teams that did emerge from the data. The patterns discovered through this process were then grouped according to the major function they fulfilled. Some "teams" seemed to have mainly an administrative function, i.e., change facilitation was a part of numerous other administrative tasks. Other "teams" appeared to be created specifically to aid the change process and had no other responsibilities. The label, configurations of leadership, is used by researchers to indicate the variety of leadership teams and their functions.

Findings

As noted in the previous section, the two principal roles found most frequently in the data were coordinating the work of the school-based administrative team and functioning as a participant in group decision-making/participatory management. Thus, it is not surprising that some leadership team existed in almost every school visited. In many schools more than one leadership team was operational, given the function, or raison d'etre of the team. All, however, were dependent in some way on the principal -- some for personal sanction, some for active involvement, some for budget approval, some for consulting and reinforcement of their activities. Many of the individuals involved in these teams were part of the administrative structure. Some, however, were teachers and department heads working as a

facilitative team separate from administrators. In still other cases, teachers and administrators worked together to provide leadership for change efforts. The term "configurations of leadership" was coined as a general title for these teams because often the same individuals may have different leadership roles on different teams dependent on the task. In almost every case, these "configurations" involved some combination of administrators and department heads or teachers.

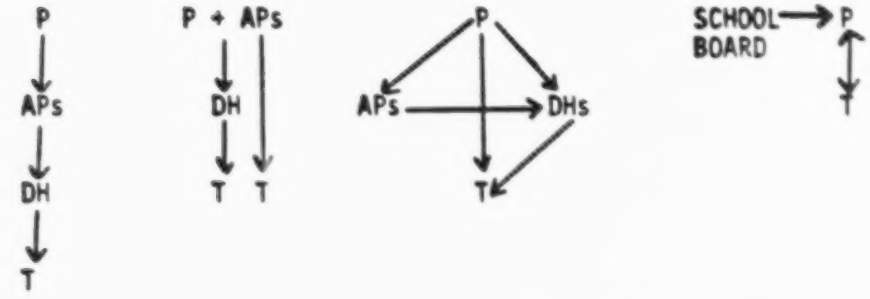
The secondary analysis described above revealed three major patterns of leadership configurations. Of the 18 high schools visited, 44% could be classified as having one of the patterns shown in Figure 3. This figure reflects four variations of the traditional hierarchical model for leadership with the principal at the head and assistant principals, department heads, and teachers in descending order. The major function of this pattern is to attend to the administrative tasks necessary to the running of the school, to provide for communicative channels from principal to teachers and students, and also to provide a channel for the delegation of other tasks or responsibilities, including any change efforts in the school. In other words, facilitating change was a part of, or laid on top of, all of their other responsibilities. Variations such as 3a and 3c in Figure 3 reflect larger schools of different sizes, often where responsibilities are strictly designated -- for example, the principal may be responsible for public relations and general supervision, while actual work with teachers and students is done by one or more assistant principals. Figure 3d shows a pattern where the most significant interaction for change in the school occurred between the school board and the principal; than between the principal and the teachers. Teachers in the school felt they had input to the board's decisions and were able to initiate as well as respond to change. Not surprisingly, it was a small school.

Figure 4 shows a number of patterns of leadership more specifically related to change facilitation. In this case, they are patterns existing separate from administrative structures. The leadership team facilitating change may not involve the principal directly, though it may be formed through delegation by the principal or under the principal's general supervision. Figure 4a describes a pattern where select groups of teachers, department heads, and administrative personnel, often an assistant principal, work together with the intention of planning and implementing a change that is in process in the school. For example, if the change is to occur within a department the department head and teachers from that department work as a committee for change in conjunction with the administrator for that subject area. Another variation shown in 4b has the department working in conjunction with district staff around a subject oriented change, with the knowledge of the principal, but not with his/her involvement. Still another variation also shown in 4a involves the delegation of the task of implementing the change to a committee of teachers by the principal. In this instance, the committee may be headed up by a teacher well respected by both principal and peers, and often one utilized by the principal on other occasions. This committee orientation also seems to be a strategy employed by some principals and districts to involve teachers and increase teacher ownership in change efforts. In the High School Study sample 22% of the schools visited showed a pattern the same or similar to Figure 4a and 11% under 4b, making a total of 33% in Figure 4.

A third pattern, shown in Figure 5, comprising 22% of the sample, is related to participatory management and in some ways is a combination of the patterns in Figures 3 and 4. In this type of pattern, planning and decision making may be done by the administrative team with some input from an advisory

CONFIGURATIONS OF LEADERSHIP AFFECTING CHANGE

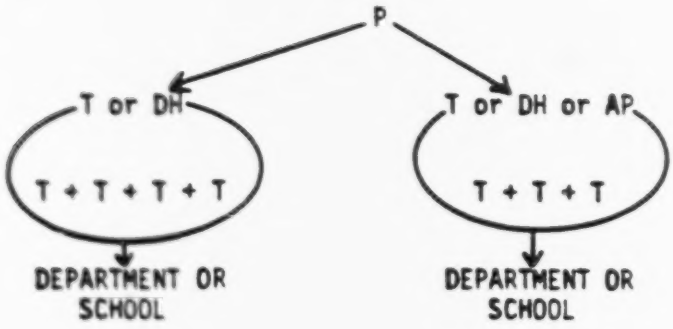
Figure 3: VARIATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE PATTERN



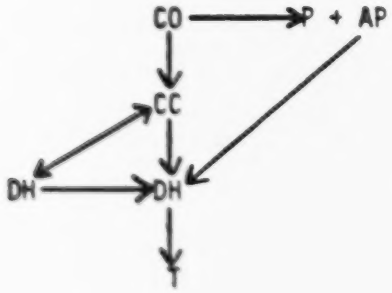
3a. 3b. 3c. 3d.

Figure 4: COMMITTEE CHANGE PATTERN

4a. general committees



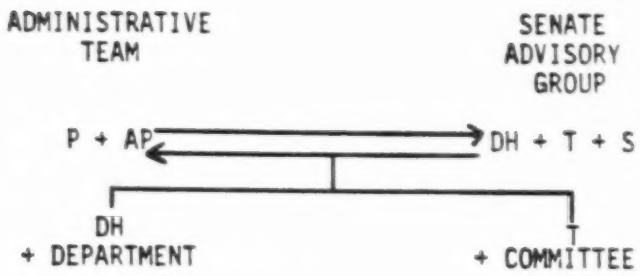
4b. curriculum change channeled through central office



Legend:

P = principal
AP = assistant principal or dean
DH = department head
T = teacher
S = student
CO = central office curriculum coordinator

Figure 5: COMBINED PATTERN



re PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

Legend:
P = principal
AP = assistant principal or dean
DH = department head
T = teacher
S = student
CO = central office
CC = central office curriculum coordinator

group, or senate, composed of teachers, department heads, and even students. Action on decisions is taken by subgroups of this larger administrative/ advisory team, i.e. by committees. The implementation of any change is then attended to by one of these committees under the jurisdiction of the senate and the principal.

The patterns shown in Figures 3 and 4 may exist simultaneously in a school because of their different functions. As noted before, the primary function of patterns in Figure 3 is administrative whereas that of Figure 4 is change facilitation. If administrative responsibilities take precedence over a focus on facilitating change, a subgroup might be created along side the traditional structure of leadership to attend to change. The connecting link in all these patterns, however, is the principal, especially in terms of change. As described earlier, the principal may only say yes or no to change, may only provide sanction and support, or may be actively involved in some way. Yet in every instance the principal was a key figure in the "configuration of leadership" for change, if only by virtue of his/her role as primary facilitator or in establishing goals for the school.

A more in-depth look. The principals and schools included in this study were designated by their own districts as "active" or "typical" (Huling, 1984) in terms of the changes occurring in their schools. The patterns of leadership emerging in the data analyzed and reported in this paper showed that those schools designated as "active" had a variety of leadership configurations existing across the schools in order of frequency -- (pattern 4a, 3c, 5, 4b). The "typical" schools showed a predominance of the variations shown in Figure 3 patterns. This might suggest that being active toward change requires a variety of leadership configuration to best meet the needs of the school and the staff. Another hypothesis would be that the committee

pattern allows for more staff to be involved and therefore contributes to greater commitment, and action directed to change. One researcher report stated: "The principal uses committee assignment to get different people involved in different things in order to spread out power and commitment throughout the staff." A principal in an active school was quoted as saying: "I am an initiator, not a reactor, sometimes my initiation is through my key staff or even individual teachers, but I don't wait on them always, sometimes I push. Nor do I squander energy or time on those who aren't ready to move with us now. They can join us later. There's just too much to do." Still another researcher states: "He (the principal) has introduced a woman to work explicitly with staff development around two new programs. He drafted a memo to department heads and teachers outlining his expectations and suggestions and he meets with his department heads regularly to work on problems. This principal is attempting to develop those department heads into a leadership team for curriculum changes and refinements." In effect, these department heads would become committee heads for change.

The relation of the principal to the leadership team or committee for change raises issues of the principal's change facilitation style (Hall, Rutherford, Hord & Huling, 1984). The researcher reports had informally designated a high number of the principals in active schools as "initiator" style principals. (Since researcher visits to high schools were of shorter duration and the principal was not the primary focus of the visit, style determination was more of an "impression" than a classification.) One of the major defined characteristics of initiator principals is a quality of "push" and the ability to plan efforts and delegate responsibilities effectively. The configurations shown for active schools seem to express these characteristics, especially delegation and planning. The role of the Second

CF, or second change facilitator (Hord, Stiegelbauer & Hall, 1984a, 1984b) is demonstrated by committee leaders who, along with the principal, have major responsibility for implementation and facilitation of change. The lower incidence of patterns shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5 among typical schools suggests that change in these schools occurs through administrative channels, perhaps on top of other responsibilities. A Second CF may exist in typical schools but often without as clearly defined a role as that of a committee leader.

Another issue related to the choice of a configuration of leadership for change utilized by schools involves other factors such as the size of the school, the approach taken by the principal toward staff, the degree of trust existing between principal and staff (as shown in patterns of communication and general climate), as well as other pressures impacting the school. All of these can influence approaches taken to change. The data from the researcher reports indicates that the larger the school, or the more traditional or older the school, the more likely some variation in Figure 3 will occur. This may be due to institutional complexity, or perhaps, inertia.

In comparing the configurations of an active and a typical school faced with the same pressure, the difference in success in approaching the change was one of principal and teacher <u>involvement</u> directed to the necessary changes, rather than a reliance simply on normal administrative channels and roles. In active schools, the principal made decisions and created a structure for what was to be done, then delegated in some way necessary responsibilities to involve a cross section of staff. The principal was not necessarily popular in all these active schools, but there was a sense of involvement and commitment to action that crossed administrative lines. The principal created the structure, or the vehicle, that allowed change to

happen. "The principal sees his role as not only as one of facilitating programs but also to make sure there is an orderly setting in which they can develop and operate" (from researcher reports). Seemingly facilitation skills or a plan for change by itself is not enough; change also demands some organization of action.

The first section of this paper indicated that principals in the study most often performed in a role related to vision and goal setting and least often related to the role structuring the school as a workplace. Reviewing the research reports, in terms of configurations of leadership for change, supports this finding, especially in schools classified as "typical." Both Figure 3 reflecting traditional administrative structure, most common in typical schools, and Figure 5, Participatory Management, indicate a greater likelihood that the principal's leadership will be within traditional administrative norms rather than heavily involved with staff in working for change. While the principal's degree of involvement may not be known by the pattern alone (without other data), schools in the sample that were more actively involved in change also showed more principal involvement with the structuring of the process, both in terms of personnel and in terms of creating channels in which it could occur effectively (Figure 4).

Recommendations

The identification of various change facilitating roles of principals and different configurations of leadership offer additional insight and understanding of the school improvement process. Most importantly, however, is what these data suggest to the high school principal or district administrator about defining and refining the change facilitating roles of principals to increase effectiveness of change efforts. A number of

implications can be drawn from the analyses of the various roles involved in facilitating change, the configurations of leadership, and the clinical impressions of the researchers.

Change Facilitating Roles of Principals

Each of the six dimensions included in the framework used for the analysis of change facilitating roles (vision and goal setting; structuring the school as a workplace; managing change; collaborating and delegating; decision making; and guiding and supporting) is involved in the process of facilitating change efforts. These dimensions and the roles categorized under each could be used by principals to do a self-analysis of their own change facilitating behaviors in order to determine if dimensions and roles are being attended to in the change process. It might also be helpful to read the examples provided to look for similarities between his/her own behavior. Such comparison could help an administrator identify those areas that may be in need of attention or that could be addressed in a more positive fashion. Certainly, not all of the roles are of equal importance. What is important, however, is that the amount of time and attention being devoted to each is consistent with established priorities rather than a result of chance or circumstance.

Several implications can be derived from an analysis of the frequency of behaviors representing the various roles. For example, it appears from this set of data that additional attention may need to be devoted to structuring the school as a workplace. Structuring the school as a workplace involves such activities as consistently communicating expectations for change and clearly defining roles of various persons involved in change efforts, neither of which appear to be being addressed to a large degree by the principals in this study.

Earlier studies have supported the need to provide teachers with reinforcement and consultation during the change process (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Hord, Huling & Stiegelbauer, 1983), yet it appears that high school principals are providing very little of this type of assistance. Whether this responsibility is attended to by the principal personally or whether it is delegated to another change facilitator, prior research suggests that it is important that the principal assume responsibility for seeing that this role is attended to by someone on an ongoing basis.

Formative evaluation of teacher performance in developing proficiency with a change is also assumed to be a critical element in many change efforts, yet data reported here suggest that this role is not typically a central focus of high school principals. If in fact the success of change efforts is partially dependent upon an evaluation component, special provisions need to be made to restructure the principal's role to include more evaluation of teachers' implementation of changes or again, the delegation of someone else to this task.

One related observation which is not directly derived from these data can be noted in regard to the principal's role as the public relations person for the school. While almost all principals perceive that they have responsibility in this area, some principals view this as their top priority and devote most of their attention to it. It is the impression of researchers in this study that while those principals may be very popular with the public and even the district administration, they do not tend to be active change agents or facilitators within the school. District leaders in selecting administrators should be aware of the trade-offs when they select a principal who perceives his/her primary role as public relations, in contrast to

perceiving the role as involving dual responsibility to the public and the school.

Configurations of Leadership

The idea of leadership configurations for change appears to offer some suggestions for change management. While the data in this study indicate that the principal has an important role in any configuration, the data also indicate that others may play important roles. The principal's role in a configuration for change might entail a leadership position, the delegation of authority, or the sanctioning of the work of the team in which he/she is not directly involved. Others on the team may have a more active role in terms of working for change. Many principals may not have considered which type(s) of configuration(s) of leadership they tend to utilize in their change efforts. For these principals, it may be helpful to use Figures 3, 4, and 5 which depict the various configurations of leadership in order to identify their own mode of operation or to consider other approaches given the personnel available to them.

The data also indicate that it is the amount and quality of involvement of the various players, including the principal, that is more critical than the specific structure employed. In other words, it appears to the authors that establishing a structure or configuration of leadership is not enough to ensure successful change, rather this structure must be operationalized in such a way as to foster meaningful involvement on the part of the participants if change is to be implemented.

Variety and flexibility in terms of the configurations of leadership employed for change appear to be characteristics associated with principals and schools actively involved in change. One strategy often used by principals in these schools was to involve a wide variety of persons in

various change efforts in order to increase ownership of and commitment to the specific changes being implemented and the change process in general. Leadership teams were flexible in that the same people were not always involved, and the teams were structured to utilize the expertise of the individuals involved and the demands of the change effort rather than the official titles or positions of the persons. This type of variety and flexibility can be contrasted with the situation where the principal always utilizes the same persons to carry out the same roles, regardless of the change being undertaken. Therefore, two recommendations for principals who want to increase their effectiveness as change facilitators are: 1) in designing configurations of leadership, employ a variety of persons for the different changes being implemented, 2) structure leadership teams based on available resources and situation-specific needs rather than formal titles or positions.

Summary

The data related to the configurations of leadership and the change facilitating roles of principals support Sarasen's (1971) contention that despite the myriad roles which principals assume, they are capable of maximizing their time and decision-making opportunities. Involvement in the change process is one indicator of the way in which principals can utilize their resources. Principals appear to adopt one of two strategies in facilitating school change. In the first strategy, the principal communicates a vision for the school to the school staff. Depending on the configurations of leadership in the school, this vision may or may not result in school change. The second strategy adds principal's involvement to the articulated vision of the principal. When the principal communicates a vision to the

school staff and is directly involved in implementation, the probability of effecting school change is greatly increased.

The implications from the descriptions of leadership configurations suggest that: 1) principals don't do it alone (Hord, Stiegelbauer, & Hall, 1984); 2) change can occur without the principal but not without some principal sanction; 3) change leadership does not have to be administrative, but usually involves administration in some way; 4) a vehicle for change is as important as a plan for change, and 5) at the high school level, the involvement of different groups and different leaders cooperating for change is one way to accommodate for the complexity of the institution and its cross departmental and administrative lines.

High school principals in the study data who were identified by researchers as being effective in implementing change articulated a vision for the school, translated this vision into goals and objectives, and devised strategies for implementation. They not only involved themselves but knew how to involve others. They saw the task of implementing change and the meaningful involvement of school staff as inseparable, believing that change could not be implemented without teachers.

In conclusion, the change process requires attention to a wide variety of roles and functions. Attention to roles and the functions they fulfill, as well as the degree to which they are addressed within the school, can contribute to the effectiveness of change efforts. The data from the High School Study suggest that there is no one effective strategy for successfully implementing change and no single pattern for providing leadership. The demands of situations are different, as are personnel available, and school priorities. Principals have a choice as to which leadership configurations they establish, sanction, or foster. They may involve a wide variety of

persons in leadership roles and structure leadership teams based upon the available expertise and the demands of the change effort or they may use established channels. Making thoughtful choices is enhanced by an understanding of the array of possibilities. Indeed, principals can make a difference in the facilitation and guidance of change. When they involve themselves with their staff in the process, the outcomes benefit the change, the staff, the school as a whole, and, hopefully, the principal's goals.

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DISTRICT OFFICE PERSONNEL:

THEIR ROLES AND INFLUENCE ON SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CHANGE:

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

Gene E. Hall
Scottie Putman
Shirley M. Hord

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the
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District Office Personnel:

Their Roles and Influence on School and Classroom Change:[1,2]

What We Don't Know

Gene E. Hall
Scottie Putman
Shirley M. Hord

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

Much has been made in recent years of the importance of school improvement at the "grass roots" level and of the significance of the local school as the unit of adoption and focus of change efforts. At the same time there has been increasing initiation of change from the district level and from agencies beyond the district. As a part of recent research on the change process the Research on the Improvement Process Program staff included some exploratory data collection and analysis activities that focused on the roles and interactions between district office personnel and participants in the change process in local schools.

The decision to add the district office focus resulted from the staff's earlier research in elementary and secondary schools in which district office personnel were noted as a source of influence on the change process. It was not always clear what they did nor how extensive their change facilitator roles were. Interestingly a subsequent survey of the literature did not turn up many studies, theories, or extensive descriptions of what district office personnel

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[2] The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education, and no endorsement by the National Institute of Education should be inferred.

do in general. Consequently, this new emphasis was added to the data collection and analysis activities.

The limited amount of work to date has focused on describing the activities and functions of district office persons and on examining their change facilitator role in schools and classrooms. At this point in the study we are only able to identify and describe a series of impressions and hypotheses; specific conclusive answers require more systematic study. In this paper a summary of the published literature about district office personnel and tentative findings from our exploratory field work are presented.

What the Literature Offers About the Roles of District Office Personnel

There is a surprisingly limited amount of literature about the roles and activities of school district office personnel. Much that is available targets the generic role of supervisor and the activities of supervision. These tend to be theoretical and context-free descriptions of the role rather than pieces that directly scrutinize real positions and people who work in particular district offices. As a result, it appears that much of the limited supply of published literature deals not with the particular real life jobs of education professionals, but instead addresses an abstract set of functions that district personnel are assumed to use. This lack of concrete connection does not appear to be the authors' intents; rather, there appears to be a contradiction between the stereotypic assumptions that are widely held about the work of district office personnel and what district office people actually do.

A review of the existing literature yielded very little concrete information about the roles of district office personnel, and nearly all of the

few studies that are available contain a lament over the lack of data. Fullan (1982) attributes the paucity of research on second level administrators and district support staff to the great diversity of roles and organization and to the preoccupation of researchers with studying superintendents. A similar conclusion was reached by a recent task force. In October 1982 the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Executive Council appointed a task force to study the roles, functions, and impact of districtwide supervisory personnel. An attempt by the task force at reviewing data already available revealed that there were few objective data about the role and importance of district wide supervisors (Costa and Guditus, 1984). Harris (1985) who agrees with this summary suggests that existing information may be difficult to find because central office personnel are generally assigned multiple roles and the literature often masquerades under several different titles, such as supervision, supervisory practice, or clinical supervision. He further suggests that one might need to come about descriptions of the role of district office people "through the back door," which means one may need to take an indirect approach to the literature search. Still, the basic impression is that the available literature is centered around the generic role of supervisor and supervisory practice. The many other roles and activities of district office personnel seem generally to have been neglected as topics for study; although the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's synthesis of the school effectiveness research indicated that there are several actions that the district can take, such as the establishment of clear and stable policies, expectations for improvement, and strong systems of support to help schools become more effective (Goal-Based Education Program, 1984).

Types of Studies Available

Of studies that have been done, most have utilized questionnaire/survey methodology. Smith (1983) examined 21 studies on supervisors and found that eighteen of the 21 studies employed questionnaires, one used an interview, one combined a questionnaire and an interview for data collection, and one was based on observation. Sullivan (1982), whose study also used observation, documented 14,753 minutes of supervisory behavior.

In 1984, the 1982 task force appointed by ASCD called for research studies to be done on district office personnel, and offered mini-grants to encourage and stimulate research in this area. The results of those studies are just now becoming available. The task force in the mean time did a study of its own by surveying the population that responded to the Costa and Guditus (1984) article announcing the ASCD project and available fundings (Blumberg, 1984). The survey, they are quick to point out, yielded more questions than answers.

Classic Role Descriptions and Training

The classic description of the role and activities of district office personnel is well represented in the earlier work of Harris (1963). According to Harris there are four types of positions suggested under the general heading, "supervisor": general, all-level supervisors; general, specific-level supervisors; special, all-level supervisors; and special, specific-level supervisors. He lists the tasks of supervision as developing curriculum, organizing for instruction, staffing, providing facilities, providing materials, arranging for inservice education, orienting new staff members, relating special services, developing public relations, and evaluating. These

tasks are implemented by supervisors through planning, organizing, leading, controlling, and assessing (Harris, 1963).

Glickman (1981), however, prefers to view supervisory behavior on a continuum ranging from listening to reinforcing behaviors, with three viable orientations: directive, non-directive, or collaborative. Sullivan's (1982) observation of supervisors suggests however that the actual day-to-day activities of supervisors are incongruent with the classical description of the role. A functional analysis of her data using Mintzberg's categories showed that supervisors primarily maintain the day-to-day operations of the school system, and essentially function as do managers in industry. Ninety-eight percent of their activities fell into the managerial categories defined by Mintzberg (1973) with especially high activity in three categories: resource allocator, monitor, and disseminator, which indicates that the supervisor acts as an insider, one who is primarily concerned with internal operations. There was little activity in areas requiring external contact as an official representative of the school system. According to Sullivan the supervisor acts as an information broker and is literally a hub of communication. Sixty-one percent of the supervisor's time was spent in communications; two-thirds of the communications were informal, brief contacts with one or two individuals that lasted usually five minutes or less. The bulk of the communication was lateral, a small amount (9%) was with superordinants, and only 14% was with teachers. Supervisors initiated 62% of all contacts.

According to the report of the ASCD study (Blumberg, 1984), when supervisors were asked what three functions seem to consume the majority of their time during a typical work week, there was a variety of answers. However, several categories predominated: 1) meetings, 2) paperwork, 3) planning, 4) curriculum study, 5) staff development, 6) public relations, 7)

trouble shooting and reporting to the superintendent, and 8) visitations to schools and observations. Other categories in the list included budget, personnel, dealing with parents, teaching, district wide activities, research, scoring tests, etc. District office supervisors were frustrated by not having enough time to do what was needed to be done, and by having to wear too many hats. The report concluded "central office supervisors seem to be very busy people, involved in doing many things, some of which appear to be more symbolic than concrete" (Blumberg, 1984, p. 15).

Smith (1983) reports that there is an increased emphasis on administrative and personnel functions for supervisors and that after having reviewed 21 research studies on supervisors, she still was not able to find a standard description of the supervisor position. Blumberg (1984) reports that there is a probability that much of the supervisor's time is taken by activities not directly related to the exercise of their expertise. Costa and Guditus (1984) noted that supervisor's roles, expectations and job descriptions are often vague. According to Sullivan (1982) job descriptions for supervisors have traditionally echoed the supervision literature and there is an inconsistency between the job descriptions and the work that is done. Training also has been traditionally based on the literature. One general implication out of the literature is that supervisors are doing jobs for which they were not trained, or if they were, the training was based on ungrounded theoretical models, rather than analyses of what they actually do.

Elimination of Positions

Another pattern in the findings is the indication that the number of district wide instructional supervisors has been slowly but steadily declining during the last decade (Costa and Guditus, 1984). Approximately one half of

the respondents to the ASCD study indicated that district office supervisory positions in their districts had been reduced and the result was that they had to assume additional responsibilities, which reduced school visits and increased the number of teachers they had to supervise (Blumberg, 1984). About one third of the sample thought that if their jobs were eliminated the services they performed would no longer be available to the district, especially if their jobs were very specific, such as subject matter specialists, as opposed to general curriculum people. Blumberg (1984) reports that "these people, for the most part, seem convinced of their worth to the school district" (p. 16). As convinced as they are of their worth to the school district, they receive little formal credit or feedback about their accomplishments (Costa and Guditus, 1984). They seem to get a sense of their effectiveness or lack of it through informal means, such as casual comments and reactions from administrators and teachers, rather than from any systematic procedures (Blumberg, 1984).

Result: Confusion

Given the general lack of information about district office personnel, the inconsistencies between the standard descriptions of their roles and the reality of the work they are actually doing, and their tendency to be assigned multiple roles, it is not surprising that there is confusion surrounding the role (Blumberg, 1984; Harris, 1963). The variety of job titles of the people who work in the district office also adds to the confusion. The job titles of the people who responded to the Costa/Guditus article "covered the waterfront" (Blumberg, 1984, p. 2). Some of the terms or labels given to people who work in the district office include consultant; coordinator; specialist; instructional leader; advisor; resource teacher; staff developer; subject

matter specialist; director of curriculum and instructional services, media, materials, and/or elementary and secondary programs (Costa and Guditus, 1984; Harris, 1963). To add to the confusion, the term supervisory personnel includes the superintendent, supervisors, principals and other administrative and special service personnel giving leadership to supervisory activities regardless of their position, title, status, amount of responsibility or formal authority (Glickman, 1981; Harris, 1963). In theory, the term supervisor is reserved for those whose primary responsibility is supervisory activity (Harris, 1963). Yet the wide variety of titles and labels seems to suggest a lack of underlying agreement. However, most seem to cluster into two broad categories or levels--line and staff (Costa and Guditus, 1984; Fullan, 1982). Unfortunately, little is said in the literature about the differences and/or similarities between line personnel and staff personnel.

Interviews conducted by the ASCD task force members suggested that "the role expectations of the positions with which we are concerned were simply idiosyncratic to each situation" (Blumberg 1984, p. 2). And "it seems to be the case that even with specific job descriptions the role of the central office supervisor tends more toward vagueness and ambiguity than toward concreteness" (Blumberg, 1984, p. 15). Harris (1963, p. 103) suggests that this confusion over titles of supervisors is indicative of the generally confused thinking about central staff organization.

District Office Role in Change

As scarce as the district office literature is, it does include references to district office responsibilities and involvement in change (Cox, 1983; Fullan, 1982; Harris, 1983). Huberman and Miles (1984) report that district office administrative commitment is important to the success of an innovation

and that pressure without district office support and commitment leads to teacher resistance and failure. They also report that district office people are most often the early advocates of an innovation. According to Harris (1963), one of the major responsibilities of school supervisors is to stimulate change and to develop acceptance of the idea that continued change is inevitable and can be highly desirable. Fullan (1982) reports that some school districts establish effective change processes while others follow a disastrous pattern, and that the district administrator is the single most important individual for setting the expectations and the tone of the pattern of change. He admits though that "although there is a fair amount of evidence about the role of the administrator in change..., there is little representative information on what administrators do and think in their total roles" (p. 160). In an article that describes how principals, external assistors, and central office staff each contributed to a change effort and the outcomes of their particular assistance, Cox (1983) reports that the help of the district office people in a school change effort contributed more than any other single group of assistors. They can perform critical functions that make school improvement really work. Cox suggests that district office personnel have emerged as significant actors in the process of change and that they may well be the "linch pins of school improvement efforts" (Cox, 1983, p. 10).

In summary, the literature base is surprisingly limited. There appears to be some inconsistencies between the realities of practice and the ideals reflected in the literature. More study is needed to understand clearly what district office personnel do, and what the real possibilities might be for their influence of the change process in schools and classrooms. This is another basis for our emerging focus on these individuals.

Plan of the Study

One objective of the Research on the Improvement Process (RIP) program is to develop an overall perspective on the change process as it occurs in elementary and secondary schools by integrating the results of our previous research in elementary schools with the findings from current research on change in high schools. Accomplishing this goal has required that at least minimal information be collected about the roles and functions of district office personnel.

More specifically, the study questions for this phase of the work are:

1) What kinds of changes are occurring in schools in the district and how have they been facilitated?
2) How has (school based) leadership affected the change process in schools?
3) What is the function and influence of the district office as it relates to school change?

The information and data that have been compiled to address the question about the district office have been derived from two sources. The first source is from analysis of the literature and previous studies which were briefly summarized above. The second source is from analysis of interview data. The interview data base includes tape recordings of interviews, collected in earlier RIP studies, that provide occasional references to the district office, and audio tapes of recent study interviews including specific questions about district office personnel. Appendix 1 is a summary of the data base.

Appendix 2 is a summary of the interview questions that were used with district office personnel during the 1984-85 current data collection period. Appendix 3 is a summary of the subset of questions that were asked of

school-based personnel (principals, teachers, department heads, etc.) regarding the role of the district office.

Analyses of the interview data and related documentation that was collected during the two- to four-day trips to each school district have included systematic, individual interviewer debriefings and self written debriefing protocols based upon answering structured questions. Additional reduction and analysis activities included pooled debriefing of the several interviewers from each site using a set of structured questions that were based on the study questions; re-listening to the taped interviews for the purposes of developing catalogs of types of practices, perceptions of practices, and descriptions of practices; and staff discussion and speculation among themselves and with research consultants and practitioners about the role and perceptions of district office personnel.

The remainder of this paper is a summary of the tentative descriptions, hypotheses and recommendations that have emerged out of these exploratory field work activities and data analyses.

Description of Findings of Initial Studies of the Role of District Office Personnel

The findings from the data analyses can be summarized in five categories: (1) description of the regular jobs and roles of district office personnel, (2) the role of district office personnel in relation to the change process, (3) description of particular strategies and tactics that are used by district office personnel in change, and (4) perceptions of the district office personnel by others. A subsequent section reports on life in the district office. The descriptions of findings, impressions and hypotheses that follow

are organized under these headings.

Description of the Regular Jobs and Roles of District Office Personnel

Our findings and descriptions of the roles and practices of district office personnel are quite consistent with the previous work of Blumberg, Glickman and others, as described in the literature review in this paper.

District office personnel are involved in a wide range of administrative, evaluative, and facilitating activities. One useful way to cluster activities is to distinguish between "line" and "staff" positions. Staff personnel are those who have no authority over persons for whom they provide consultation, advice and counsel (i.e. teachers). Line personnel on the other hand are those who have persons reporting directly to them (direct reports) and are placed on the organizational chart some where between the superintendent and teachers. Line personnel supervise and evaluate personnel under them in the organization. Staff personnel are responsible for programs or projects rather than "positions." Some examples of activities that staff personnel are engaged in are finding and providing materials and ideas, providing staff development training, visiting classrooms, meeting with department heads, meeting with other staff personnel, scoring tests, developing curriculum (adding courses, developing lesson plans), monitoring, evaluating curricula and programs, initiating, adopting textbooks, and planning. Activities that line personnel are involved in include attending a variety of meetings daily, establishing committees, evaluating programs and personnel, completing paperwork, "putting out fires," meeting with supervisors or consultants, making purchasing decisions, providing an ear to principals, and initiating ideas.

A wide range of titles is used for district office positions. The selection of titles that are used in district offices is not consistent across

districts with a "supervisor" in one district having the same role as someone called a "coordinator" or "consultant" in another district. Up to the level of the assistant superintendent there does not appear to be a consistent pattern to the roles and responsibilities that are associated with particular job titles. There is some consistency in the use of the director title, with these persons typically having other personnel report to them and they in turn reporting to assistant superintendents.

Personnel in the district office often seem to have relatively little clarity about the scope and primary purposes of their roles. Further, there is wide variation in their views about their role. When they do have clear understanding, it appears to be directly related to the superintendent's expression of clear expectations for them. If the superintendent does not articulate a sharp image or does not really provide attention to their role, then there seems to be a great deal of ambiguity in their definition. In general, district office personnel appear to have a clearer definition of the roles of others in the school district than they do of their own.

There is tremendous variation in how much time district office personnel spend in schools. Some roles appear to require little or no time in schools, such as the budget director or personnel officer. Others may require as much as 80% - 90% of their time in schools (e.g. special education teacher consultants). Interestingly, there is wide variation in time spent in schools among individuals filling the same role. For example, a person in the role of curriculum specialist could work directly with teachers to support their instructional practices and spend the majority of their time in schools and in classrooms. While in another district a person with the same responsibilities may spend little time in classrooms. There is inconsistency even within a district. For instance, in one high school, teachers reported never seeing the

language supervisor while the math supervisor was reported to be in the school frequently and regularly.

There are different central missions for district office personnel. One responsibility is to help the district in planning, and to fulfill the many district administration functions, including the basic bureaucratic operations of the district. These are the budget, personnel, buildings and grounds directors and other types who manage the supportive and organizational arrangements for the district's schools. All of these people and jobs tend to be clustered together within the same label of district office. Another mission is providing direct support of instruction and school based activities. Teacher support may be supplied by generalists whose work is generic in nature with a focus on the processes of instruction. Other teacher support comes from subject area specialists who supply help within the context of particular curricula. Yet another mission has to do with control and monitoring of school personnel. Some curriculum specialists may assume this function; however, monitoring of school administrators is more typically done by higher level district office staff.

There is a dramatic difference in the amount of real authority and power individual district office personnel have that is related to whether they are in line or staff positions. We define line to mean those directly in a chain of command from the superintendent on down to staff in schools. Persons in line positions are directly accountable for personnel "below" them, and persons below line personnel are accountable "to" them. Staff positions are those for which the job responsibilities do not carry with them formal authority over the people who must follow through with their suggestions. The power and influence relationships can become complex, especially given the overlapping array of organizational and instructional missions.

Many personnel in the district office do not understand the distinction between line and staff positions in an organizational structure. There seems not only to be a lack of conceptual understanding, but also a lack of recognizing the operational differences and what they can mean for responsibility and potential for influence. Comments such as, "I don't know, I guess I'm neither fish nor foul," or, "I'm both," were frequently heard answers to questions about placement on the organizational chart.

The number of district office staff that are available to work in schools seems to be directly related to the amount of support from outside the district. Outside support comes from state, federal or other such external sources. Those areas of schooling that have special interest support, such as special education, gifted and talented, compensatory education, bilingual education, etc., have relatively larger district office staffs and they are more actively involved with schools and teachers. Further, their ratio of district office staff to principals and teachers is much smaller than for their regular classroom counterparts. District office personnel for regular schools and teachers have to work with larger numbers of schools and teachers.

The district office personnel in the special interest areas appear to be more cohesive within their units. These individuals seem to be clearer about their missions and their missions appear to be more tightly defined. They are more focused and direct in their work. They are more visible in schools and in comparison to the regular district office staff they seem to be more influential politically within the district office.

There is little congruence between what district office personnel say they do and what others perceive that they do. These perceptual differences are particularly true of persons in staff positions. For example, it is commonly believed that a major role of curriculum coordinators in the district office is

to assist teachers in classrooms. Yet for many coordinators this is not possible because there are so few curriculum coordinators in relation to the total number of teachers in the district. They are spread so thin that they cannot be everywhere. Curriculum coordinators spend a lot of their time in doing district-wide planning, ordering of materials, and other administrative and strategic activities that are not seen by school personnel. Most curriculum specialists state that they would like to have more time in schools than they do, but the other parts of their job demand that they be elsewhere.

Teachers view district office people in line positions as being remote from their classrooms. When line people visit buildings they tend to visit with the principal, and not with teachers. When staff people visit the building they tend to deal more with department heads and teachers, thus the teacher's perception of the line people is that they are much more removed and distant from personal contact. As one illustration of this perception, when teachers refer to the district office as "downtown," they seemed to be referring more to the line administrators than the curriculum coordinators.

Teachers have very little understanding of what persons in the district office really do. As one illustration of this, when teachers were asked about changes that were taking place in the district office, they were often unaware of such things as severe staff reductions that had occurred in the district office. They would be equally unaware of district office personnel changes and they frequently seemed uninformed about issues that the district was facing. "I'm not sure what the district administrators do." Further, teachers doubt that district office personnel know about life in schools. For example, teachers are aware that the district office has curriculum guide lines but "they don't really know what goes on in my classroom."

District office staff feel successful when they see teachers doing things that they have suggested. This indicator of effectiveness was frequently reported by curriculum coordinators. It was not as clear, however, how line staff knew that they had succeeded. It would seem that their image of success is more frequently based on the absence of problems or issues to be handled. However, some line personnel state that higher scores on achievement tests are an indication of their success.

Once assigned to the district office, most personnel do not wish to go back to the classroom, and appear to be successful in remaining "downtown". After personnel move to the district office, they tend to relish the new found opportunities and challenges. Those in staff positions tend to move up within the hierarchy of the curriculum and instruction side of the district office, or they move on to special projects or to larger districts. The line administrators' career path moves from assistant principal, to principal, on the way to district upper level administrative positions. Curiously, there does not appear to be a lot of lateral movement from the district office curriculum side to the administrative side. Rather, it appears that persons in the district office on the curriculum path who wish to move up on the administrative side, first have to go back to the school as an administrator and then re-enter the district office on the line side. The career path to superintendencies is through the principalship and line administration, not through the staff and curriculum side.

How They Work in Relation to the Change Process

The limited research work to date makes it difficult to derive trends and generalizations about how district personnel are involved in change. However,

the following is a summary of some speculations and hypotheses about this aspect of district office persons' work.

District office personnel are providing the impetus as well as being the source of many innovations that are implemented in schools. Many district innovations are created or required as a result of state and federal initiatives. As a consequence schools and classrooms are the recipients of a large number of "outside" innovations. Many of these mandates are seen by district leadership as an opportunity to reinforce their own aims and goals. Consequently, district office personnel often "seize the moment" for transmitting their expectations to schools. There are also many district-specific initiatives, which in combination mean that district office personnel tend to be associated with a large number of changes.

District office personnel tend not to be aware of apparent differences in how they approach elementary schools as compared to secondary schools. It seems reasonable to hypothesize that district office personnel will approach and work in change with elementary schools differently from high schools. Much to our surprise, they do not appear to have consciously thought about these differences. Of course, some district people come from elementary (or secondary) schools and are assigned to work only at that level. When we probed those who were assigned K-12 we were able to identify some differences in their approaches to elementary and secondary schools. For instance, they typically expressed the idea that secondary teachers were subject experts and did not "require" their services. They also noticed that it was hard to gain entry into high schools to introduce ideas; therefore, they tended to give more time to elementary schools where teachers were more open to change and interested in trying new ideas. When pushed to explain details of the differences in their approaches, it was difficult to hear clear distinctions.

Teachers tend to link the credibility of district office personnel to their teaching assignment prior to joining the district office. A comment frequently heard from high school teachers and from people in the district office was that district office personnel with an elementary background had less credibility in high schools. However, the picture does not seem to be that simple. The explanation about lower credibility may be related to a particular district office person's lack of adaptive skills or who for some other reason is not effective in working in high schools. The lack of credibility may relate to the lack of subject area speciality, which is generalized by associating it with their elementary background. Clearly there are coordinators with elementary backgrounds who are effective and credible in high schools. One question for the future must be to study more closely the factors that enhance credibility.

A district office person's credibility with teachers is frequently associated with how long the person has been away from the classroom. This factor of time and distance from the classroom was more frequently associated with staff persons from the district office than with line persons. Teachers imply that after three or four years away from the classroom, credibility is lost. Yet there are many veterans of the district office who are still highly credible. It appears that teachers use these stereotypes to cover a range of district office staff weaknesses and sins, or possibly to keep the changes that district office personnel bring barred at the classroom door.

It appears that the line administrators in the district office make the adoption decision and then it is the staff persons who plan and facilitate implementation at the school and classroom level. This makes sense in that staff persons are more often in schools and line persons are not. Staff persons have closer working relationships with teachers. And a large

percentage of changes are of a curriculum nature which suggests another reason for staff personnel who are typically curriculum specialists to be more involved.

The people in line positions tend to be more administrative in orientation and they deal more directly with principals. In the change process, the role of line personnel becomes one of interpretation of policy (normally only when asked). They provide administrative communication to school administrators and link the district office's goals and expectations about changes to the school. Because they evaluate principals, and "help principals set goals," they are in a position to strongly influence principals and therefore the prospects for change. The follow through with teachers tends to be left to staff persons.

Strategies and Tactics Employed to Facilitate School Change

A part of the research focused on identifying approaches and behaviors that district office personnel employed and found effective in influencing the change process in schools. One of the first impressions is that district office personnel, as well as their school counterparts, have not consciously thought about the change process techniques that they employ. Therefore the insights that we have are more inferential than reflective of clear articulation and examination by school personnel. In spite of this handicap, there are patterns and strategies that district office personnel employed. These include the following.

There is nearly unanimous agreement in the district office that principals are responsible for change within their buildings. The line persons deal with their "direct reports," (principals) in terms of holding them accountable for what is occurring in their building, and staff persons in the district office recognize the importance of working with the principal when they want to see

change in classrooms. In contrast to this perspective, it appears that principals in general do not perceive the empowering mandate to bring about change in the building that district office personnel are assigning them. Delegation of change facilitating duties is sometimes abdication.

A frequently observed strategy for making the initial adoption decision is down/up/down. The typical scenario for this strategy begins with someone(s) in the district office coming up with an idea for a change that is needed. It is then sent "down" to teachers, and perhaps principals and community representatives, to get their initial reactions. Their recommendation is then sent "up" through the chain of command and, with further refinement and formulation, through the superintendent to the board. There, a formal decision is made, and it is sent "down" to the staff to procede with implementation. This down/up/down strategy was frequently heard about. Interestingly, teachers are as aware of their part in it as are district office personnel. Further, they tended to see the process as addressing their desire to have "input," but sometimes say their input didn't change anything.

Perceptions of the District Office Personnel By Others

Establishing credibility of district office staff has been approached in several ways. When a district office staff person with elementary school experience becomes involved with secondary schools, there are ways to initiate their work that enhance potential for credibility. One entry point is to have that person sanctioned by a secondary teacher, district office person, principal, or someone else who already has credibility and can certify the new person. Another approach is to have the (elementary) staff person involved in initial developments of some new thrust for secondary schools. Then by the time that person becomes involved in working with the various secondary school

staff, they associate the person with the innovation. If the innovation is positive, this gives associated expertise to the district office person.

The reciprocal doesn't appear to be as significant a problem. Capable staff persons from secondary backgrounds seem to be more accepted in their area of expertise by elementary school teachers. However, staff persons from the district office with secondary backgrounds also need to be sensitive to the cultural differences of the two kinds of schools.

Teachers perceive district office personnel in line and staff positions differently. In terms of teacher's perceptions of district office persons it has already been pointed out that line persons from the district office are rarely seen or thought about by teachers. On the other side, teachers know that staff persons are regularly in schools, and teachers are quick to say, "They're there when I need them."

Teachers differentiations among the staff persons in the district office are based on their perceived utility. "I will call on some, others I will not call." It has not been possible to determine the specifics of why teachers so actively seek some and avoid others. In our interviews with teachers, probing questions were sloughed off with comments such as, "some have forgotten what it is like to be in the classroom." Occasionally we encountered attitudes or relationships similar to what Blumberg (1980) referred to as the "cold war" between teachers and supervisors (p. 5). In terms of teacher's perceptions of the frequency of district office staff contacts with classrooms, it is probably best summarized by one veteran high school teacher who said, "She liked what I was doing [last fall] so I probably will not see her again." When asked why, "If they like what you are doing, you don't see them. If you aren't doing a good job, you see them."

Staff persons in the district office derive their power from someone with power. If the staff person needs access to a school or needs to put pressure on a teacher, they have to work with the principal or someone above the principal to sanction or to require the kind of change that is being requested. Staff persons frequently have to spend a great deal of energy and intervention time in attempts to get support, however there has been no chance to explore this issue or document this in the work that we've done so far.

District office persons who work with special interest teachers are seen as highly visible. Because there is a greater number of special program district office persons to work with a fewer number of teachers, they are able to be in schools more frequently for greater amounts of time. This gives them much more opportunity for visibility than those district office persons working with regular teachers.

Individual teachers do not perceive that they have a great deal of influence on district policy. Unless they were directly contacted with regard to a particular issue and remember that they were contacted, they are quick to point out that they did not have input. In that sense, the down/up/down strategy doesn't appear to have equal effects across all innovations and teachers. If an individual teacher was not contacted or does not associate some earlier activity that they were involved in as being a way of seeking their input, then they are quick to discount that they ever had any input.

District office personnel believe that much of what they do is based on teacher input. Even though teachers do not perceive that they contribute very much to the development of district policies, programs and projects, district office personnel view the input process very differently. They can report about the dates when particular items were solicited and obtained from

teachers. Nonetheless, if teachers did not have a major role, they do not recall the minor ones. It is not clear how to reconcile these differences.

Perhaps the best summary of the differences in perceptions with regard to how teachers perceive the role of district office personnel is made in these quotes. The elementary schools' perception of the district office's purpose "is to guide us." The high schools state, "The district office is to coordinate." In contrast, a teacher pointed out, "In elementary school we are told to do things they wouldn't even ask a high school to do." Both groups, teachers and district office personnel, have their own perceptions of what is happening; however teachers in general have relatively little interest in what goes on beyond their classrooms.

Life in the District Office

District office personnel do not have a simplistic role. It seems clear that the role of the district office personnel is more complex and less well understood than is suggested by the stereotypes held by the public. There is an assumption that district office personnel and especially curriculum staff spend nearly all their time actively involved in supervision at the classroom level. In fact most district office personnel are not doing this. Our findings from our interviews are consistent with the research of others such as Glickman and Blumberg, who were cited earlier.

Communication lines within the district office do not always work well. It appears that district office personnel typically do not know what other district office personnel are doing. In several districts there were few systematic approaches to communication within the district office, even within the curriculum area of the district office. In general, the line

administrators appear to be in closer communication around their jobs than are the curriculum and instruction staff.

District office personnel are consistently in a cross fire of demands and expectations. It appears that the immediacy of job demands in the district office do not allow time for staff to be as actively involved in supervision of schools and classrooms as they would like, and as others expect. There seems to be a constant barrage of demands for meetings; writing and reviewing planning documents; filling out forms for the district, the state and the federal government; and responding to individual requests of administrators and teachers. This in combination with the various legal issues, policy decisions, moment-to-moment crises such as leaky roofs, litigation, and textbook adoptions consume so much of their time that many line and staff persons are not regularly involved in schools.

District office personnel do not have specialized training for their positions. Even though district office persons may be trained in supervision, they are not trained in the kinds of activities that the bulk of their jobs entail. They are dealing with so many types of pressing items that they do not have time to be reflective about their work. Further, they do not appear to have a great deal of training in how to facilitate change and to be leaders from the district office. One of the reasons that this may be true is that so little is known about what their jobs are and how they can work in leadership roles.

Describing what they do is difficult. What district office personnel do is seldom documented. It is even more difficult to demonstrate that it makes a difference. The details of their specializations and services are not well documented and the things that they do are not immediately reflected in classrooms or by noticeable differences in outcomes on student test scores.

Further, persons in the district office are not doing a good job of communicating and describing what they do. It is not clear that they have individually, and certainly not collectively, conceptualized their roles and functions or described operationally how they relate to the mission, goals, and objectives of the district.

Who is line and who is staff? There is a distinction between approaches, responsibilities, and activities of district office personnel based on whether they are in line or staff positions. At the same time, these differences are not conceptualized and well understood by those in the positions. And they are not understood by their counterparts in the schools. Many district office personnel are not even clear about who is line and who is staff. Some think they are both.

The District Office in Action

The following case studies illustrate many of the points included in the description of findings of the role of district office personnel in change. Two districts are examined, both of which are similar in size and population.

Case Study A: From A System of Schools to A School System

In this vignette, district office personnel in a district in the Midwestern United States turned a severe decline in enrollment and resources into an opportunity to reorganize and improve their entire secondary education program. The Superintendent in this district, which serves approximately 30,000 students, responded to the declining enrollment and the resulting decrease in state funds by recognizing the problem and pushing for a proactive response that would complement his commitment to establish a unified

curriculum. The Superintendent spurred the changes; the district office personnel responded.

In this case study the actions of the district office personnel are traced, and significant interventions which contributed to the success of their efforts at reorganizing and improving their secondary education program are presented. How the case relates to our recent study findings and speculations is discussed.

A number of important decisions, plans, and innovations were implemented to address the district's declining enrollment problem. Included in this bundle of innovations were an effort to unify and improve the secondary education program overall, and to change a self-contained vocational high school into an extended campus to serve the entire district's vocational education needs. The vocational program was coupled with special academic offerings for high school high achieving students. A related change was moving the ninth grade students from junior high schools to high schools. At the same time, special attention was given to the evaluation of teachers and administrators and to an "administrator academy," as a vehicle for improving management and evaluation skills and for soliciting and exchanging feedback.

The entire process was promoted and supported by the Superintendent by his actions and almost daily contact with the district office administrators as they worked on the written plan. He also encouraged the effort by his contact with the Board of Education. He kept them updated; he solicited their input. His position was clear to everyone.

Extended Campus Concept

One example of the district office action in this districtwide effort was the development of the extended campus concept. The plan was designed in

detail by the Director of Secondary Education who conceived the extended-campus idea as an innovative delivery system for the vocational-technical program and for advanced courses for college-bound students. She used her position as the person in charge of all programs, supervision, and evaluation, and her regular meetings with all high school principals to gain support for the districtwide changes and to facilitate their use.

A special advisory council was formed early, involving parents, students, high school teachers, principals and district administrators. Frequent contact with the Superintendent became critical as the extended campus concept became a districtwide concern. The Superintendent showed continuing support for the plan by keeping it in front of the Board. With the Superintendent's push and school board approval, the technical high school's facilities were closed as a "home campus" for students. It was reopened as a "resource center" for students from all high schools in the district, thus becoming an extended campus. A district plan for busing students from their respective home campuses to and from the extended campus for a two or three hour block of time was put into operation the first year of implementation. Counselors were made part of the "decision-making process" and were encouraged to inform students and encourage them to take courses at the extended campus.

Discussion

The establishment of the extended campus provides clear examples of two of our study findings. First, district office personnel served as the impetus as well as the source of the innovations that were being implemented in schools. Specifically, the Superintendent and the Director of Secondary Education provided the impetus and leadership for the innovations. The entire bundle of innovations was initiated at the district level in response to this district's

declining enrollment problems. The second of our findings illustrated by the scenario is the down/up/down strategy for making the initial adoption decision. After the idea was conceived and planned by the Director of Secondary Education, it was then sent down to the community, students, teachers, and principals via the Advisory Council. It then went back up to the Board. After the formal decision was made, it was sent back down to the staff for implementation.

Standardization of Curriculum

The second innovation in the district's response to the enrollment decline was the centralization of the curriculum and sets of standardized curriculum objectives. A key strategy, based on a district evaluation report and push from a school board member, was the creation of a new position, Director of Curriculum K-12. The Director of Secondary Education (line) took steps to support the Director of Curriculum (staff) by working with him to define his role and by sanctioning his role. When the Director of Secondary Education presided over meetings with principals, she asked the Director of Curriculum to attend in order to give him an opportunity to know principals better, to hear their opinions and to learn how to best work with them to implement the changes.

At principals' meetings the Director of Secondary Education not only listened to principals but also expressed her commitment to district supervisors and urged principals to use the important services offered by the supervisors and consultants. Monthly, the Director of Curriculum collected written information from supervisors about which building they had been in each day, who they saw, what they did. He also asked supervisors and consultants

not to wait to respond to calls for assistance but to go to high schools on their own initiative.

A second key strategy was the establishment of districtwide goals and objectives. The curriculum was adjusted by adding and eliminating courses. Establishment of a districtwide curriculum advisory committee facilitated this effort. Some courses were no longer offered in the home schools, (such as vocational courses, advanced placement English and history, foreign languages, and selected math, science, and social studies courses), and students would have to go to the extended campus if they wanted them. The districtwide attendance area of the extended campus sparked another district-initiated innovation. Consequently, the busing system was put in operation. Students bound for extended campus courses are picked up at their respective high school immediately following the daily attendance check. They are then bused to extended campus for a block of four hours maximum. They are returned to their respective high school in time for lunch and can easily participate in end of day school activities at their "own" high school. No high school in the district is further than 20 minutes away from extended campus by bus.

All courses in the district have districtwide objectives, and students are tested on the objectives at the end of the semester. These tests also assess teachers and evaluate courses in relationship to district objectives.

Discussion

This innovation provides a second example of district office personnel providing impetus as well as serving as the source for innovations. It also illustrates how line administrators in the district office make the final adoption decision and staff persons serve as the planners and facilitators of implementation at the school and classroom level. The line administrators

appointed the Director of Curriculum and strongly urged school-based administrators to make better use of the supervisors and consultants. It was then the staff personnel, the Director of Curriculum and his supervisors and consultants who went into the schools to teachers change their curriculum practice.

We had observed in the study the administrators in line positions tended to be more "administrative" in their orientation and to deal more directly with principals. This finding was illustrated by the Director of Instruction working directly with the high school principals and impressing them with the importance of using the district-based supervisors and consultants as resources. The principals and the consultants and supervisors would then carry the message to the teachers. As noted earlier, staff persons in the district office derive their power from someone with power. If a staff person needs access to a school, he or she has to work with the principal or someone above the principal to gain entry sanction or mandate the change. The Director of Instruction's intervention was required to activate the principals in using the consultants and supervisors.

In this case, district office personnel, both line and staff, played an active and influential role in moving this school district from a system of schools to a school system. They planned, they encouraged, they informed, they solicited input, they supported, they created advisory panels and new positions. They actively sought long-range and short-range input and feedback from a variety of sources. They adjusted curriculum, they pushed for and helped reorganize their schools. The Superintendent had a goal; he pushed and spurred the changes. He kept in daily contact with the planning process, and he updated the Board. He listened to the Board and to the administrators. The Director of Secondary Education in a line position, was key in developing

plans, and the Director of Curriculum in a staff position, was key in implementing those plans.

No knowledgeable person would surmise that the final plan, or even the direction of the change, pleased everyone. However, knowledge of that direction was widely known and accepted. Even in the presence of resistance and declining resources, the changes were accomplished.

Case Study B: Where There's A Will, There's A Way

The introduction of a new superintendent in 1982 marked the beginning of a major reorganization for this high school district. Over a time span of eighteen months, two assistant superintendents changed roles, many new district administrative staff positions were created, and five of the nine high schools had new principals. The goal of this reorganization was the improvement of instruction in district schools through increased coordination and centralization at the district office level.

Previously the superintendent had been in charge of the design and development of an assessment system for the district. Now he played a central role in providing the impetus for many of the organizational and program changes that were implemented in the district. The coordination and implementing of the changes were addressed by the superintendent through the creation of new staff positions, in particular that of a "Director of School Effectiveness" who would work with the high school staffs and their principals in planning, monitoring, and solving the problems of implementing the various innovations that were clustered under the school effectiveness label. While this role and the School Effectiveness program were innovations in themselves, they also served as a focal point for coordinating many of the other

innovations initiated by the district office. School Effectiveness became the "umbrella" for the coordination and integration of the various instructional and professional development efforts initiated in the district.

District Sponsored Innovations

Historically, this district had a reputation for an emphasizing instructional improvement. The approaches taken to improving instruction and the level of student achievement varied, however, with the individual school, its community, and its principal. The new superintendent and district office personnel saw increased centralization as one means to even out the differences between schools, as well as for coordinating the necessary resources for making change easier. The district office introduced a number of innovations and innovation bundles to the schools in the 1982-83 period. These included the introduction of a new attendance policy, the continued implementation of Madalyn Hunter's Essential Elements of Instruction, the use of Program Improvement Plans by teachers, a reorganization of curriculum and curriculum options, a change in graduation requirements, the development of districtwide curriculum objective tests, a movement toward increased accountability and evaluation of teachers which was linked to a system of merit pay, and the School Effectiveness program, to name a few. All of these were introduced, facilitated, and monitored by the district office in some way or another.

District Strategies for Adoption and Implementation

The general approach taken by the district office in initiating new programs follows this sequence: once an idea or need is established that is in

line with the district's emphasis on instructional improvement and school effectiveness, it is presented to the Board for initial discussion. The Board then directs a committee of teachers and principals to learn more about the program or process and make recommendations. If the committee and the Board then decide that the innovation would be beneficial, curriculum coordinators or others would be trained in the program so that they could provide training for the entire district.

Overall, the district had shown a tendency to be more effective in initiating implementation of selected innovations than in successfully completing implementation such that changes became institutionalized. Teachers were exposed to a number of different innovations at once without a clear implementation period. Their response was increased concern about accountability as these new programs were monitored. They saw the district innovations as being too numerous to be able to do well. As the focus of these innovations was on achievement scores and a more centralized evaluation system, teachers saw their own evaluation as linked to district changes. The School Effectiveness process was intended as a means to provide for discussion, clarification. and implementation of district changes as they were in line with the needs of specific schools. While this did not entirely soothe teacher concerns, it did create a better sense of school decision making. Despite pressure on teachers, the district's emphasis on instructional improvement and school effectiveness made a definite difference in student achievement in the district.

The district office did attempt to provide better facilitation for implementation through the creation of new staff roles that would lend assistance and expertise to teachers using the innovations. Two new staff roles were established within each school to allow for in-house guidance and

development for the Essential Elements of Instruction program. These persons also worked with the principal at the school to assess staff needs and develop resources. Further, curriculum coordinators at the district level were trained as experts in new programs and were a resource to teachers implementing district programs. Creating the staff role of the Director of School Effectiveness, however, was a major strategy within the district's game plan for school improvement.

The School Effectiveness Process and Its Director

The role of the Director of School Effectiveness served as a focal point for the coordination of several programs and was a staff position reporting to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. The person selected for the role had been a high school principal in another state and was familiar with the needs and attitudes of both school staffs and school principals. The School Effectiveness process required a person who could set long-range goals and develop plans directed toward the goals and who could interface well with both teachers and other administrators.

The School Effectiveness process requires that each school form a school team to assess the needs of the school and plan how to meet those needs. The Director meets with the school teams on a frequent basis with the goal of clarifying, refining, and facilitating the process. At the introduction of the program, the Director developed a 3-year structured plan intended to result in institutionalization of the Effective Schools process in the district. His activities came out of that plan and included individual conferences with principals before major team sessions, collecting data for decision making in team groups and being visible and accessible (He would stay in the school all day, even if there was only a morning meeting just to be available.). He also

wrote notes to principals and teachers on the team about what they did, sent articles to teams with personal notes, and generally emphasized credibility, "I want them to see the process as serving something higher than (instructional) whims. This is the eighth school I have been in this week. I will attend a meeting in the morning and talk about effective schools and the process and then talk to teams members one on one. I try to deal with each school, team, and principal in an individualized fashion. I make myself available. (Sometimes it seems like) I haven't developed a major strategy (to get the innovation going) other than to sell myself."

The other innovations also being implemented by the district became a part of the Effective Schools process because they were a part of being "effective" and because the school effectiveness teams provided a natural forum for problem solving and planning .

The major limitations expressed by the Director in regard to his role were that he was limited in budget, could not evaluate teachers and use evaluation to enforce what might be done, and that he had no line authority within the organization to back up what he saw as necessary action. At times getting things done at the district office required him to situationally utilize the chain of command to get backing for what needed to be accomplished.

Discussion

The actions taken by the district office and the events surrounding those actions illustrate many of the findings discussed earlier in this paper. The process by which innovations were adopted and implemented is the down/up/down decision-making pattern in which early discussion of the change goes down to the school level for investigation and recommendation, back to upper

administration or the Board for final decision making, and back down to the school for implementation. For all of the innovations mentioned in this case study, and others, the district office was the impetus for and source of the change. The district's focus on instructional improvement was the basis of a game plan for the selection of innovations and the creation of staff roles to facilitate these innovations. As noted in one of the findings in an earlier section of the paper, "It appears that the line administrators in the district office make the adoption decision and then it is the staff persons who plan and facilitate implementation at the school and classroom level." The game plan developed by the district formalized this through the creation of the new staff roles related to innovations as described earlier.

Another finding concerning differences between line and staff positions is illustrated by the role of the Director of School Effectiveness. While the Director was responsible for much of what happened in the schools, he did not have the line authority necessary to back up some of his dicta and had to seek it from other sources, i.e., "staff persons in the district office derive their backing power from someone with power" (previous section). Still another finding links the credibility of district office personnel with their assignments prior to joining the district office. In this case the Director's prior experience was as a high school principal which helped his credibility with school staff. Further, the requirements of the job made him more visible to them. Given that most teachers seem to have little understanding of what persons in the district office do, also a finding discussed earlier, the experience and visibility of the Director likely contributed to the success of the program.

The descriptions of events from these two districts provide examples of the data from which our impressions and hypotheses, as presented earlier in

this paper, were derived. The activities illustrate what district office people do. In the next section of the paper, we provide some recommendations for what district office staff might think about doing in the future, and we also speak to policymakers and those researchers who are planning to do studies of district office staff.

Recommendations for Next Steps

Key points and a summary of initial understandings about the role of district office personnel follow in this section. It should be re-emphasized that the analyses to this point are exploratory and descriptive. The purpose is nomination of variables and generation of hypotheses that can be the subject of further study. We should note also the limits to the power of the data and therefore the findings. The sample is limited in size; in some ways each school district is an n of one. Thus, generalization of findings must be approached with a great deal of caution. At the same time, we have travelled a great deal, talked with a large number of practitioners and researchers, and have accessed the data and studies of others when it has been available to help build this picture. The tentative hypotheses and speculations seem reasonable at this point.

In our view there is an abominable lack of information, understanding, concepts, and resources available for examining and supporting the growth of staff in district offices or to guide related policy development. The results of the descriptive work that we have done is consistent with the results of earlier studies, but we believe we have raised some new questions and we have some suggestions for what could be constructive next steps. We have organized these into three areas of recommendations -- those dealing with research,

practice, and policy.

Research Recommendations

There is a need for ethnographic studies. Interviews and questionnaires can provide only so much detail and there is always a degree of uncertainty about the validity of responses. Further, there are differences in perceptions depending on who in the district office and in schools is interviewed. Sorting out which reports and perceptions are valid descriptions of district office personnel will require intensive documentation strategies. An important next step would be a set of in-depth ethnographic studies of district office personnel. An intensive set of field studies with ongoing documentation and description of the roles, activities, influences, and effects of their work should be very instructive. With in-depth case studies, data can be accumulated and used to more objectively develop job and role descriptions. Hopefully, a part of this work would be done with the specific focus of looking at their role in influencing the change process in schools.

Standard role definitions need to be developed. Out of this type of field work and examination of administrative theory, curriculum theory, and school district policy, it should be possible to develop and propose standard definitions of roles and standard terminology for each role. At the present time labels and role definitions are highly idiosyncratic and it is not at all clear what responsibilities go with each role. In this study and in the earlier works of others the focus has been on describing what they do. An equally important question is what should they be doing? What can these roles be and how can we define them in ways that will advance the process of schooling? Model development and role definition can contribute a great deal to research and practice.

Definitions of effectiveness are needed. For both line and staff persons in the district office there is a strong need to conceptualize effective practice. Effectiveness in this sense has to be defined in terms of the roles and responsibilities that district office personnel have. It is highly unlikely that the effects of district office personnel will be visible in student achievement test scores. And if they are, it is going to be through some long term pattern rather than through the immediate feedback that policy makers and others are typically looking for. Other criteria of effectiveness must be considered. One set of criteria could address their effectiveness in facilitating change. Another could deal with their effectiveness in approaching and working in credible ways with elementary and secondary schools. Still others could be developed around their in office tasks.

Practice Recommendations

District personnel need to work on defining and clarifying their own roles. District office personnel in many ways are completely overwhelmed by the number of tasks and responsibilities that they have. An important step toward helping them feel less overwhelmed, as well as for giving them a sense of priority over how to spend their time, would be for them to clarify their roles and responsibilities. This could be done through a district office retreat, or with the use of consultants. The objective would be to get clearer about what the priorities are and which activities they should be doing. A part of this role definition must address the issue of coordination and communication among the various members of the central office. Another part should address the differences between jobs that need to be done in the district office, those that need to be done in schools and with teachers, and

their responsibilities that lie outside of schools and the district office. Once these definitions and distinctions are developed they should be shared.

District office personnel need to develop a supportive constituency. At this time it is clear that district office personnel do not have support groups. This is especially true and critical to persons in staff positions. The general perceptions and cynicism of teachers is that they don't know what district office personnel do, that they probably wouldn't be missed too much if they were gone, and that there are too many of them. At the same time, district offices are contracting in size and more tasks are being placed on them. Unfortunately the tasks and jobs that the district office personnel are doing are not those that teachers and others expect in terms of their stereotypic definitions. As a consequence, when a press comes for a reduction in forces there is no clear support for district office personnel. District office personnel will have to deliberately work to develop constituencies that are aware of what they do and why it is important. Otherwise the eroding of their numbers and the confusion about their image is likely to continue.

Cuts in personnel should be done based on systemic planning. One of the consequences of the absence of a constituent support group for district office personnel is that when district resources are reduced, they become easy targets. The scenario seems to be happening repeatedly. Due to board, tax payer, state or federal cut backs, the district must adjust and the majority if not all of the cuts come out of staff positions in the district office. This is a politically sensible place to cut because the view of teachers and others is that there are too many people in the district office and "besides, they never get to my classroom and I don't need them." The other areas of the district office are seen as more directly tied to vital functions of the district. For example, the persons in line administrative positions are direct

supervisors of school personnel. In addition, persons in the special interest programs are generally protected from cuts by state and federal legislation and perhaps even state and federal support.

The consequence of reducing district office staff positions is that regular teachers, who tend to be the largest number of teachers in the district, will have even fewer support resources. Ironically these same teachers sometimes advocate the cutting because these personnel are not highly visible. Meanwhile the special interest supported district office personnel continue to work with a relatively small proportion of the schools and teachers. Short term effects of cuts in the district office have not been documented. The longer term consequences of cutting the district office staff likely include decreased curriculum relevance, restricted strategic planning for the district in terms of instruction and curriculum, less relevant professional development for teachers and other instructional staff, and a general lack of updating teachers, administrators and curriculum. There may be a short term budget balancing, but the consequences can be long term bankruptcy of the district's instructional program.

District office personnel need to become reflective about their work. Persons in the district office need to take time and develop skill in becoming reflective about what they do. The task burden and working norms of the district office seem to work against this goal. Yet, reflection about what they are doing individually and what they are doing collectively is sorely needed.

Line people need to increase their visibility too. The little time that line administrators have in schools is almost exclusively spent with principals. It would help in developing their support group if they were more active and visible in classrooms and if they regularly interact with teachers

directly. However, this would mean doing more than the token "walk through."

Policy Recommendations

Be cautious in reducing district office staff numbers. Most other personnel within the school district have an active support group, ranging from the political power of special interest to the power of unions. Even line administrators in the central office typically belong to the principals association and are supported by them. However, central office curriculum staff are not aligned with and supported by their counterparts in the teachers union. "Supervisor's jobs are constantly in jeopardy at the bargaining table, but they seldom have an advocate during the negotiating process" (Costa and Guditus, 1984, p. 84). Without a political advocacy outside, or the power base of the union inside, this role becomes very susceptible to absorbing the impacts of ebbs in district resources. Curriculum staff do serve a set of functions that deal directly with the mission of school districts. Their removal is likely to be noticeable in a couple of years and caution is needed in reducing these positions without first projecting what the consequences are likely to be.

Recognize the authority limitations of persons in staff positions. There is a tendency on the part of administrators and policy makers to assume implicitly that staff who are not in line positions can do things the same way that those with formal authority do. Persons in authority positions seem to forget the implications of power that go with their positions, and thus have unreasonable expectations of the potential influence of persons in staff positions. Persons in staff positions have to constantly rely on their "credibility." As a last resort they have to go back through the chain of command to have authority by referral, and use indirect influence techniques.

The consequence is lost time and energy that could be more directly used in effecting school practice. If persons in line positions would do more to sanction and support the activities of staff persons, then all would have greater effectiveness.

Legitimize the many activities of district office personnel. It is clear that district office personnel have a wide range of roles and responsibilities. Because their jobs are fractured and diversified, it is difficult for them to show an accumulation of effects or to have a continuing sense of priority. Policy makers can help by clarifying and publicizing the major functions that make up the roles and responsibilities of different district office personnel. If accountability and planning systems reflect these policy guidelines, then it is conceivable that district office personnel will have less role ambiguity and that others will begin to understand the importance of the roles in terms of their realities rather than in terms of the stereotypes that are so commonly held.

Conclusion

In summary, the roles and functions of the persons in the district office are multi-faceted and diversified in terms of location as well as in terms of task. The stereotypes of the roles that are held by the public at large and by the teachers in schools do not appear to be congruent with their actual activities. Line and staff differences appear to be a useful first step in distinguishing roles. The differences in formal authority appears to be a critical factor. Beyond that, it appears there is much to be done by research that can inform us about the lives and functions of persons in the district office. There is also much that district office personnel can do to become

clear about their roles and functions and how they can be more effective, especially as it relates to facilitating change in schools.

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Note: We wish to acknowledge the special effort and assistance provided to us by Carl Glickman in our search for and acquisition of references.

Appendix 1

Summary of Data Base

	1983	1984	1985	Total
Number of Districts	5	5	1	11
Number of Interviews in District Office	19	25	16	60
Number of School-Based Interviews	208	221	61	490

Total number of interviews = 560

Appendix 2

District Office Interview

Background/Career Path

1. How long have you been in this position? How did you come to this DO position? What did you do before?

Organizational Role/Relationship with Others in DO

2. What is your role as _____? What do you actually do?

3. Is there such a thing as a "typical" day for you? Can you describe it, or maybe describe what different days are like? What percent of your time do you actually spend in schools during a typical week? (Distinguish between time in school offices and time in classrooms with individual teachers.)

4. If you had to choose one adjective (metaphor?) to describe your role, what would it be? Which things in your job take the most time?

5. Who do you work with in the district office? What is your relationship to them? Are there regularly scheduled meetings with DO people? Who attends them? Who organizes the meetings? (If no meetings, how do you communicate information? Formally and/or informally)

6. How do you perceive the roles of other DO personnel in change? Do other DO personnel spend their time much the same as you do?

7. What's your relationship with the Supt.? How do you communicate up the chain of command?

8. What resources and/or decisions do you control?

Role/Relationship with Schools

9. In your opinion, are there many changes taking place in the schools in your district? Can you tell me what kinds? Where do most of these changes originate? Do you initiate any?

10. Are you responsible for implementing any specific programs or changes this year? What are some of the things you are doing to accomplish this? (Probe for specific activity, building-level contacts, percent of time engaged in.)

11. What is your relationship with the high school? Is it different with the elementary school? How do you approach schools when you want to get things done? (For instance, how do you initiate contact? Do you approach elementary and high schools differently?

12. How do schools "gate keep?" How do you get through it?

Appendix 2 Continued

13. When the elementary school wants your help, who contacts you, and how? When the high school wants your help, who contacts you, and how?

14. How do you (or other DO people) monitor the implementation of changes? (Or do you?)

Status/Indicators of Effectiveness/Efficacy

15. What are the differences between line and staff DO positions? (Probe: in their perceptions/activities/effectiveness?)

16. Do you perceive yourself as having real power to change things?

17. Do you get feedback on your work? From whom? Do you get support? From whom?

18. What kind of tangible or intangible ways do you have of knowing when you're being effective in your work? How do you know when you've made a difference? What are the indicators to show you've made a difference?

Influence of Size

19. Have you ever worked in a district office that was larger or smaller than this one? What was different about the way you worked there?

20. Do you have any ideas about where you'd like to go next in your career?

Appendix 3

School-Based Personnel Interview

District Office Relationship

For each of these questions keep in mind the tentative distinctions between (I) general curriculum/subject matter staff, (II) special interest area consultants/supervisors, (III) line administrators and (IV) other administrative personnel.

1. From your position, what do you see as the major responsibilities of the personnel in the district office?

2. In what ways do district office personnel interact with and influence what happens in your school/classroom?

3. How often are district office personnel in your school (and classroom)?

4. What kinds of things/help/ideas do you get from the district office personnel you have contact with? (Who, what and cross-check with D.O. interview)

5. What have they done in your school (and classroom) that has made a difference (positive or negative)?

6. How do you/can you influence decisions in the district office? (Decisions may need to be focused on curriculum or some other area, if so is there more than one area?)

7. Have there been any recent changes in the staffing or organization or responsibilities of the district office? What were they? Why did they occur? Have these changes affected you or your school in any way?

8. When the district office people want to bring about a change in your school, how do they go about it? Is there a pattern to how they bring about change?

Discussant Remarks on High School Symposium

Robert Yin
COSMOS Corporation

I really think we need to admire the research method underway at the R&D Center for Teacher Education. The research topics are all of high priority. Today, I would like to say some things about pitfalls in doing such research. Recognition of such pitfalls might make us all more critical listeners or interpreters of the studies as they are being reported. The pitfalls generally result from the fact that researchers must make choices, and the choices often dictate some methodological outcomes, independent of the substantive issues being raised. I guess I'd like to mention four pitfalls that occurred to me as I listened to or read all of these papers.

Pitfall number one is a common question about measurement and definition. It is very important to listen, I think, to the first paper, Rutherford and Murphy's paper, and understand how they defined change and understand that they did recognize that there were three major changes and 38 minor changes, or some such; but in their analysis of the data they lumped all of these changes together. That's not something one might always want to do when studying organizational change. When you listen to the reactions to change, you must understand that the major changes are getting weighed equally with the minor ones, and maybe that's not capturing exactly what's going on in the high school. Secondly, in their definition they defined it as changes that had to take place outside the classroom as well as possibly inside the classroom. They did not include in their definition, as I have read it, changes in the classroom only. Well, if you start to find changes outside the classroom, the teacher tends to care a little bit less, I think. So, generalizations such as, "There was less resistance to change from teachers,"

might be quite different if we talked about the change being in the classroom. This pitfall is an example of the choices that have to be made in designing a research study. There is no perfect measure of change. There is no singly acceptable measure. However, the measure chosen frequently leads to some of the conclusions, and such conclusions are therefore not necessarily as global as the investigators might like.

A second pitfall has to do with the source of evidence. All of these studies are based on interviews and verbal reports. My preference would always be to reiterate this point throughout the reporting of findings, and it was done in one of the papers -- e.g., the "principals" paper used the word perceived throughout the presentation of data. These were not behaviors that they were presenting as far as I am concerned; they were perceived behaviors. They were self-reports of how "I perform my role." These were not the roles from the traditional sociological literature which talks about really looking at roles, both as they are perceived and enacted, i.e., examining real behavior. At the same time, it doesn't require ethnography to look at real behavior as recommended by the paper on "districts." One can make some instrumentation that allows examination of actual decisions being made and so on.

As an example of the importance of the source of evidence, consider the field of political science in which there is a long-standing debate about whether a power elite exists. If you studied this question by asking people, "Is there a power elite in this city?" generally the answer would be "yes," because most people could name a small group of officials or business people who seem to be in on everything. On the other hand, if you chose a different methodology -- e.g., selecting a sample of decisions made in the city -- and you looked at what determined the outcome and who played the key role, the

answer would inevitably be that there was no power elite, that it was a quite pluralistic picture because so many different individuals were involved. There is no right answer. The two answers are contradictory, and it depends on the source of evidence used by the study. Once again this source reflects a choice made by the researchers.

A third pitfall has to do with the unit of analysis. This gets very tricky the more you do organizational research and the less you do individual research. I think Hall's paper had the greatest problem because he was interviewing district staff, the sampling of which is not identified, and yet he talks about district "office" behavior. You can't quite always make that leap from a few individuals to a whole office, and you have to be careful about, "Well, what is the office?" Offices do have organization charts, policies, components other than personnel, and one has to design a study not limited to interviews only. I'd also like to say that the comment about, "We have enough questionnaires and now we can move on to ethnographies," presents the two types of evidence as if they are alternatives, that one should either do one or the other, but not both. On the contrary, what we need are studies that do both. As I said, you don't have to do a whole ethnography, but you really always want to have interviews and surveys, even within what I call case studies.

The last pitfall has to do with the cross-paper design among these papers. This design is not addressed, except implicitly, even within the whole research program. That is, how do you put Humpty Dumpty back together again? This is a program on the study of the American high school, and what you have is pieces of it -- e.g., the principal, the district office, the teachers, the department heads. It is not obvious that the pieces can always be added back up to the whole. I would call attention to psychology in which

the study of faces, called physiognomy, is concerned about the whole face. One can also be concerned about the parts of the face. There are people who study noses (nosology); there are people who study scalps (phrenology), or other parts of the head and face. You can be indeed interested in the parts as an end in themselves, and in this manner the principal study might well contribute to the principal literature, the district study to the district literature, and so on. However, how all these parts will add back up to the whole is not clear.

My guess is that if one is interested in the whole, one needs to start with the theory of the whole. Having articulated the theory, then possibly turn to each of the parts, but then you know what you are looking for. Gene Hall's paper is beginning to get at that at least in the cross perceptions issue, and I will bet you will never get similar perceptions by principals or superintendents about who has the power. However, you are not trying to. Your theory would predict that in looking at the whole the perceptions would be different, and so that's a good finding rather than a frustrating finding. There are ways of starting to theorize about the whole, and that is one direction that could possibly give more coherence to the various pieces.